# MUSIC-LOVERS
## John Armstrong Walker

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*For the love of money is the root from which all evils grow. It is this uncontrolled craving for money which has made some people lose the way, and caused them to experience the sting of*
*many a bitter pang. (1 Timothy 6:10, Wm Barclay)*

To people who find themselves out of work

# 1

It was a typical Saturday morning over on the southside of Glasgow; sitting at the piano the MusicMan casually opened a songbook. He looked at it, then he glanced at the two hopeful young faces who were waiting for him. Agatha, who is twelve, is learning to play the piano, and Tom, her friend, who is fourteen, is learning to play the guitar.

As the music teacher turns another page, he inquires in a loud voice, "Right, who's first then?"

Agatha decides she is first, and she walks smartly over to the piano.

The young music teacher waits till she is seated, then he asks her, "And how are you today, Agatha?"

Agatha looked at him, and he thought she was going to say, "I'm very well thank you - and you?"

Agatha, however, suddenly became shy and, as her cheeks grew rosy, she quickly turned away from the music teacher, and bent down and took something out of her bag.

After a few seconds, she said, "This is for you, Mr MusicMan, I bought you some toffees from Marks and Spencer, since you don't charge me anything for my music lessons."

The MusicMan did not know what to say, but he managed through a smile to thank her. Then he started to play her favourite tune, *Over the Rainbow*; and as he played the tune the MusicMan pointed out to her all the musical terms he could find: "We know it is in the key of G, Agatha, because it has one sharp in the key sign. The C sharp here, and the B flat there, along with the F natural up here, are what we call accidentals."

Agatha, with wide eyes staring at the sharps and flats inside the bar, pushed a small finger towards the *Complete Piano Player* book. She then repeated what the music teacher had just said, "Accidentals are sharps and flats, or naturals, which are not expected in the music."

The MusicMan laughed a little to himself, then he said gently, "Yes, that's right, Agatha, well done."

About half-an-hour later it was Tom's turn. As soon as he heard his name: "Right, Tom," he put down his comic, jumped off his seat, and went over to the piano carrying his acoustic guitar.

Once there, Tom started strumming his guitar, and not long after this he started singing a song: *"I am a sailor, sailing over the sea, watching the waves roll, that will set my soul free. But when I come back again, I'll be a better man - you'll see."*

The MusicMan listened to him at the same time as he wrote down a few things that would hopefully help Agatha next week: "Keep your fingers arched, keep your thumb near your hand, and relax."

When young Tom had finished singing his song about sailing the seven seas, the MusicMan spoke to him, "Right, young sailor, let me hear you play all your scales - both major and minor."

"All of them?"

The MusicMan looked at him and smiled, "Yes, all of them."

Tom played the fool for a time. Then he played all the scales - both major and minor - as if walking up and down a never-ending flight of stairs. After he had finished playing them, he turned to the MusicMan, and said boastfully, "How's that then, Mr MusicMan?"

The MusicMan seemed pleased, and he promptly moved the lesson on, and started talking to him about triplets and broken chords.

Tom, for whatever reason, always took longer than Agatha; however, after a full forty minute session the second lesson was over, and the MusicMan handed him a cassette to listen to.

"Right, I want you to listen to this when you get home. I have recorded some classical music and some popular songs on tape for you, and I want you to learn the songs for next week."

The reason the MusicMan looked at Tom when he said this was to try and remind him not to forget.

Every Saturday around midday Agatha's mum came back from the shops to pick up her daughter, and her daughter's friend young Tom, from the apartment of the MusicMan. The MusicMan noticed that Agatha's mother was late today, and he thought he had better give his two pupils something to drink. When he returned from the kitchen the MusicMan stood there holding two glasses of lemonade in his hands.

Tom was lying on the floor looking very relaxed. He was reading a book about empires and wars. The book belonged to the MusicMan. When young Tom got up to take a glass of lemonade from the MusicMan, a bookmarker - which was actually a ticket for a fancy dress ball - fell to the floor in the music room.

Agatha also took her drink, and then the two of them went back to doing what they were doing before: from two stories up Agatha stared out of the window and watched the sky change colour behind a foreground of late summer, early autumn, trees, and Tom turned another page of his book.

The silence unfortunately did not last very long; for young Tom noticed the ticket for the ball lying on the floor. He picked it up, and he read it out loud: "Are you going to the Money-lovers Ball?"

The music teacher, busy fixing a steel string to his electric blue guitar, looked up at once. Agatha embarrassed turned round quickly, and she said, "Don't listen to him, MusicMan, he's always talking rubbish like that."

The MusicMan, still thinking about what he was going to be doing that night, hardly gave it a thought. Then just as he started to tune the sixth E string to the E note on the fifth fret, he suddenly grasped what young Tom was on about. The MusicMan said to him in an easy tone, "Oh, that's just an invitation from a weird group of people who go by the name of the Glasgow Money-lovers. They all live and work in the city."

The MusicMan noticed how fascinated they were, by the group who call themselves Money-lovers, and he thought he had better say something to them about the people who put their trust in money, and throw wild parties at this time of year.

After tuning the high E string on his guitar, he said, "I don't know why it happened, but at the end of the last decade, and the beginning of the nineteen nineties, materialism became fashionable in Glasgow, and money became king. Many people fell in love with money, and went about with the attitude that you could only be happy if you had lots of the stuff. As the years went by they became known as Money-lovers."

Tom looked at the ticket again. In fact, he turned it over to see if there was anything written on the back of it. Then he asked innocently, "Are you a Money-lover, MusicMan?"

The MusicMan laughed and said, "I certainly am not, young man."

Tom and Agatha still looked a bit perplexed about what they had just heard, so after a few moments of thoughtful consideration, the MusicMan added, "Hopefully things will get better as we approach a new century."

The MusicMan knew in his heart of hearts that no matter what political set up there would be in the future, the two of them - when they were older - would have to form an opinion as regards money, its power, and its use.

The MusicMan, as he looked at their young faces, thought to himself, "Sometimes it's best to explain difficult things by turning them into a joke."

The MusicMan watched Agatha take the ticket from young Tom and, as she read it for herself, the MusicMan made up a song

entitled: Money Love. And as he played some chords on his electric blue guitar, he sang it to them: *"Money-men who are your friends. You know what they say you are…"*

The MusicMan sang the last verse as if to mock all Money-lovers all over the world. Then he told young Agatha and young Tom about the song the Money-lovers sing when they get together: *"Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."*

Thinking about one or two of them, the MusicMan added, "Yea, they really are a weird lot, right enough."

Just then the door opened and in came Agatha's mother. Agatha's mum flopped down on a chair by the door and let her shopping bags fall to the floor. As if exhausted she said, "Well, well, well, what have we here then - a new singing trio," and as she put her fingers through her thick mousy brown hair, she smiled at her daughter. Then she said to the MusicMan, "Well, don't stop singing - just because I have come in."

Agatha spoke to her mother as if she had just come back from a dark and dangerous world, "The MusicMan has just been telling us about some people in life who worship money. They are called Money-lovers, mummy."

Agatha's mother, who no doubt had come across a few in her time, replied in a worldly sort of way, "Oh, has he now."

The MusicMan chatted to Agatha's mother, and she asked him many questions about the musical book he was trying to write, and about the songs that were to appear in it.

Agatha stood beside her mother, and she seemed to understand the system grown-ups use when they talk to each other. Agatha said to her mother, as she looked at the MusicMan, "I hope I can buy a copy soon."

The MusicMan thought she said it as if it was just a case of him walking out of his flat and into some recording studio to record the music, then return home, write the book, and the following week the musical book would be available for sale in all the high street shops, up-and-down the country.

Tom wondered if his song about the sailor and the sea would appear in the novel. He asked the MusicMan, in a voice full of

excitement, if he could sing it, "Yea, I'll sing it, MusicMan, and you can play guitar on it."

Agatha's mother, after listening to Tom, decided it was time to go, "Right, let's leave the MusicMan to get back to writing his musical book and singing his songs."

When they got to the door the MusicMan opened it and, after arranging the same time for next week, he joked with them, "Now remember, you three, watch out for those terrible Money-lovers, out there."

# 2

That night the MusicMan got ready to meet his friends in a drinking establishment in town called the Jungle Bar. As usual, the MusicMan wore a black suit, a white shirt, and on his feet were a pair of black gleaming Oxford shoes.

After switching off the TV, he walked down the stairs and out onto the suburban streets. The MusicMan, as he walked along, stopped now and again to look up at the red sandstone flats that stood on all sides of him. Sometimes he would listen to the sounds of popular tunes, as they drifted down from the coloured lights above him.

As he walked on, he said to himself, "All you need to do is listen to the rock'n'roll music, coming down from the normally quiet flats, and you know it's Saturday night in Glasgow."

The bus did not take long to arrive and, when it entered Glasgow city centre, the MusicMan stared out of the window and watched the late night summer people, go here and there. The young men and women, in some strange way, all seemed to reflect life back to him, as they headed here and there to party or bar.

The owner of the Jungle Bar, although younger than the MusicMan in years, was of the same generation. The bouncer on the door knew that the owner knew him, and he signalled to the

MusicMan to come forward - passed the people waiting in the queue - and go straight into the bar. Like everyone else in the city, the MusicMan understood the bar to be a place where people of all ages go to enjoy themselves.

The Jungle Bar is where all the fashionable luminaries and chic people hang out to find out what is going on in the world today. Everyone who goes to the Jungle Bar is given a nickname, which usually reflects something about their character.

The dancing barman saw the MusicMan approach, and he shouted against the loud rock'n'roll music at him, "Hey, MusicMan, what do you want to drink?"

A lot of people were waiting to be served at the Jungle Bar, so the MusicMan shouted back quickly, "Whisky and ice, please!"

Standing not that faraway a soft young voice said to him, "And how are you tonight, Mr MusicMan?"

The MusicMan looked over his whisky glass and, as their eyes met, he said with a smile, "I am very well, Flower girl - hope you are too."

Flower girl worked for the Glasgow City Council in the Social Work Department - but she hated it there. She wanted to get a job selling flowers, somewhere. She thought flowers made people happy and politics made them sad. Flower girl took a rose from a vase on top of the Jungle Bar, and she put the flower into the lapel of the MusicMan's jacket. The girl who loves flowers then tapped the MusicMan on the shoulder, and she gently said, "Now that looks much better, MusicMan."

When he kissed the pretty blonde teenage girl, the MusicMan became aware of Jujube standing beside him at the Jungle Bar. Jujube worked in a sweet factory in the east end of Glasgow. She wasn't as friendly as Flower girl, but the bright lights of the city had brought her to the Jungle Bar, just the same.

Flower girl was about to say something to the MusicMan, but she saw Doctor High, the Restaurateur, and El Greco come into the Jungle Bar, and she cried out, "Look here are your friends, MusicMan."

Jujube and Flower girl never settled long in any place at one time, and they soon walked over to where some of the Jungle Bar people were dancing.

The MusicMan looked pleased to see his friends, and he greeted them all with the Good Lord's kiss of peace. As he shook the hand of the Restaurateur, he turned and said to them all, "And how are all my Music-loving friends tonight?"

The Restaurateur owned a Bistro on the south side of Glasgow, an establishment that attracted mainly the rich and middle classes. The MusicMan sometimes visited his friend, the Restaurateur, late at night after all the customers had gone. Sometimes they would sit there all alone in the restaurant and drink red wine and German beer until the small hours of the morning.

El Greco studied politics at Glasgow University; the people of the Jungle Bar thought he looked like Socrates - so that is how he got his name. The MusicMan thought he looked more Roman than Greek - but the Jungle Bar people did not agree.

The beautician, Doctor High, did not say very much to the MusicMan at first. He was up to his usual tricks chatting up some pretty young things at the Jungle Bar. Making eyes at one of the Jungle Bar girls, just beside him, Doctor High asked her, "And how are you tonight, my lovely?"

Hearing no reply and needing no encouragement, Doctor High took the young girl's hands. Then, with a wondrous look on his Mongolian face, the Doctor shook her arms making her firm but small breasts move inside her muslin shirt, and if sex had been a secret before they had met - it was one no longer.

After telling the young lady that she looked fantastic, Doctor High swaggered back over to the MusicMan and his friends, saying to himself, "Lovely girl."

El Greco immediately made a petition to the Restaurateur, "He's getting worse - look at him."

Doctor High, however, continued to entertain all the young Jungle Bar girls, at the Jungle Bar. The Restaurateur unruffled by

what he had just seen, replied enthusiastically, "He's some man, eh."

El Greco, who had been up for three nights surfing on the Internet, asked his friend the MusicMan, in a deep and serious tone, "How is your musical novel coming along?"

The MusicMan told him, "I have just finished it, and I am now in the process of writing songs for some of the characters."

This was indeed great news: one of the Music-lovers, who went to the Jungle Bar every weekend, had actually written a novel and there were to be songs in it.

The MusicMan could see from where he was standing at the bar, all the well-known Jungle Bar characters; but as he scanned their faces his eyes always seemed to fix on the woman who the Jungle Bar people call the Queen without a Crown. Many years ago, the MusicMan fell in love with her; she broke his heart. He watched her for a time chat to a few of her Blow boys and Blow girls, (hangers-on) at the opposite end of the Jungle Bar.

If truth be told the Queen without a Crown has broken most men's hearts in the Jungle Bar. When the MusicMan had fallen in love with her his whole being seemed to change. A great energy flowed through him like an electric current, and ever since then images of love and despair have haunted him. The Queen without a Crown looked the perfect woman for every young man who went to the Jungle Bar: the maid in the kitchen and the whore in the bedroom.

In a moment of pure reflection, the MusicMan thought to himself, "Broken hearts, I wonder where they go to? It's funny how I can always tell a broken heart inside someone when I meet them at the Jungle Bar."

The MusicMan's mind seemed to wander back to the bedrooms and bars he had visited with the Queen without a Crown. Then he reminded himself, "But a heart can only be broken once, praise the Lord."

As the MusicMan took another drink of whisky he thought about how his world had been put back together again, "Yes, over

the years the pain has got less and less, and the fascination of love has become something real and not imaginary."

At that moment, the Queen without a Crown came over to the side of the Jungle Bar where he and his friends were standing, and the MusicMan reminded himself, once again, about how stupid he had been.

Doctor High could do nothing about his own broken heart; for he too had been with the Queen without a Crown. Like any true rock'n'roller, Doctor High danced his little dance for her. Then he asked the Queen in a charming voice, "And how is the beautiful Queen without a Crown, this evening?"

The Queen without a Crown looked at the MusicMan. Then she looked at who he was with. She knew all the Music-lovers who went to the Jungle Bar. Just then, a Blow girl beside the Queen put her drink down on the bar and, with all the Music-lovers around her, she said in a soft and funny voice, "They say, you know, in the Jungle Bar that every man's heart must be broken by a Queen without a Crown," and then she giggled.

The Queen of the Jungle Bar laughed, then she became serious; for she had some very important news for her followers: "I've managed to get myself a job reading the news on the local television station."

In the silence that seemed to follow - even though the music blared around them - she looked at all the faces of the Music-lovers, as if to gauge a reaction to her words.

The Doctor too reflected for a moment, then full of enterprise he wondered aloud, "I hope Your Majesty will give my shop a little mention now and again in between the important programmes."

This pleased the Queen without a Crown, and she laughed. At midnight in the Jungle Bar, the people get so excited that they all start to dance on top of the tables, and on top of the chairs. They shout to one another about what they think is going on in and around the Jungle Bar scene tonight.

Thinking about what they should do tonight El Greco, in a deep academic voice, suggested, "I think we should all go to that club called Blu's tonight."

The Restaurateur had a different view, "I've heard that the Attic Club is out of this world these days."

The bald tall Restaurateur did not say where he had heard this, but his friends knew that his playboy image would not be seen in any out of fashion clubs in Glasgow.

As the MusicMan and his friends talked about where they should go tonight, three well-known characters entered the Jungle Bar scene. King Clown a well-known Glasgow Money-lover, who always wore a thick black Crombie coat, flapped his foot as he approached the Jungle Bar, with two of his Money-loving friends: the Gorilla, and the Nodding Horseman.

The Money-lovers who frequented the Jungle Bar just looked like ordinary everyday people: for dress sense has no class distinction inside the bar. Many people who went to the bar felt in their heart of hearts that they worshipped money - even though they always made a joke about it.

King Clown took some money out of his pocket, and as he flashed it around, the Nodding Horseman nodded to the Jungle Bar people. Being close to King Clown, the Nodding Horseman nudged him when he spotted the Queen without a Crown. She was standing with a few Blow boys and Blow girls.

King Clown, after paying for the drinks, walked up to the Queen without a Crown. He said to her in a strange and funny voice, "Excuse me, your Highness. I'm just about to go abroad on a world cruise. Would you like to join me?"

The Queen without a Crown looked at a Blow boy beside her and, as she turned and walked away, the Queen said, "How eccentric, how unusual."

King Clown returned to his Money-loving mates at the Jungle Bar, and reported to them rather optimistically that he would grab the Queen later on in the evening.

Hearing the news that the Queen without a Crown had got a job with the local television company, that he had just bought,

King Clown flapped his foot twice on the Jungle Bar floor to show his delight.

The Nodding Horseman loved this nonsense. He turned to the MusicMan and his friends, and reported proudly, "King Clown is the richest man in the city, you know, and he can get anything he wants."

At times like this in the Jungle Bar it seemed as if there was a non-stop contest going on to see who could be the most outrageous character.

Some of the Jungle Bar people said that King Clown was born on a dark night inside a caravan, while it was going through India; and the first image his black eyes focused on was a gold coin, that just happened to be lying around in the back of the trailer.

His sidekick the Nodding Horseman had acquired his nickname, because when someone asked him a question, in the Jungle Bar, he would say, "Yes, yes, yes," and nod, nod, nod. The Nodding Horseman never disagreed with anyone.

The Gorilla got his name because of his attitude towards the business people in the city. He wasn't, however, as tough as he thought; for he was forever falling in love with famous people and making a fool of himself. All three men involved themselves in business schemes in and around the city, and wherever they could they tried to back people's ideas - with other people's money, of course. The Money-lovers never signed any contracts.

It was true King Clown had just taken over the local television company on behalf of some international entrepreneurs. The Money-lovers boasted that they could make money under any government; but they liked the present one - there was no doubt about that.

The Nodding Horseman started to chat to the MusicMan about someone he had seen on TV recently. The MusicMan thought this odd: for the Nodding Horseman hardly ever said a word to any of the Music-lovers, in the Jungle Bar. However, everything became apparent when he nodded in the direction of

the Queen without a Crown, and he said proudly, "King Clown's after her."

Sensing that something had being said about her at the other side of the Jungle Bar, the Queen without a Crown tried to catch an image that would tell her what the Money-lovers were up to. But the Queen got bored watching them, and she turned away and started talking to one of her Blow boys again.

At the other side of the bar, King Clown full of passion told the Gorilla man, "I'm going to get into foreign films about killers and crime. All the top media people, along with the academics, tell you that you have to subdue the viewers with images of horror, rather than good news. This is how you get their attention, and how, of course, you get their money." King Clown laughed after saying this. Then he added, "I had lunch just the other day with a big shot editor from Australia, and we spent the whole day laughing about what turns the common man on."

The Personnel Director of King Clown's TV company, the Gorilla man, feeling that it was his turn to speak, interrupted the Clown. He bawled, "And I'm going to keep the workers on their toes every day by threatening them!"

The Gorilla man, just to show his boss he meant business, banged down his bottle of American beer on top of the Jungle Bar, and he shouted, "If the workers want a fight - I will give them one!"

This made the Nodding Horseman nod, and King Clown flapped his foot again in delight. Then the three well-known Glasgow Money-lovers all started to sing their favourite song about money-love: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

The MusicMan felt that even though the Gorilla laughed at the crazy words of the song; he would be hard on his workers. As he watched them the MusicMan noticed that when King Clown talked about money to anyone, in the Jungle Bar, he always threw doubts into every corner of the bar, as if to worry the listener.

The common people who went to the Jungle Bar, during the great capitalist era just before the millennium, had watched people

like King Clown, the Gorilla, and the Nodding Horseman, bow down to false gods.

The MusicMan stared at King Clown, and he wondered to himself, "Does our government not know what it is doing giving these money-grubbing people power."

The Nodding Horseman noticed the MusicMan stare at his friend, King Clown, and the man who nods all the time turned round and said to the MusicMan, in an excited tone, "He's the greatest money man in the city, you know."

The Nodding Horseman then withdrew back towards the bar, and he nodded slowly to himself. Meanwhile, King Clown tried to dominate the company with any fact or fancy that came into his money-loving brain. When someone said something to him about a scheme that had possibilities, King Clown would push the conversation in the direction he thought it should go. If he could make any money out of the idea, then he stored it away until he thought it would work. So the name of a bar, or business scheme, said in jest at the Jungle Bar, one day would suddenly appear in the city somewhere.

King Clown was never unsure of himself, but if ever he was, there was always the Nodding Horseman close by to give him a nod of encouragement. The conversation, for some reason at this point, had died a little at the Jungle Bar, so King Clown turned to the Music-lovers, and said to them,"I hope you're all coming along to the Money-lover's Ball, next week."

When the MusicMan heard him say this he immediately thought of young Tom and Agatha, and how they had mocked the Money-lovers that morning.

The MusicMan smiled and replied, "Yes, I got my invitation in the post last week."

The Restaurateur had also received his invitation in the post, and being a man of business, he replied accordingly, "Definitely, it sounds good; I'll be there, all right."

Just then, the Incredible Carpet Salesman and Ribbentrop the Glasgow poet appeared at the Jungle Bar. The people of the Jungle Bar said that they had a love-hate relationship with each

other. Having already had a skinful to drink the Incredible Carpet Salesman ran over to the Restaurateur, shouting, "Marion's dead!"

The Restaurateur had never heard of her, and he thought it all a great joke; but the freaked-out Carpet Salesman told him that he had just had a drink with the widower, in a bar, over on the south side of Glasgow.

Needing a drink, the Incredible Carpet Salesman ordered two bottles of champagne, and he told the dancing barman to put on some loud rock'n'roll music. Then he turned round and with a big wink he stuck twenty-five quid in the Restaurateur's pocket, "Put that towards the Jewish Blind Society fund, behind the bar in the restaurant."

After a few glasses of champagne, the Incredible Carpet Salesman who had apparently that day sold three Persian carpets, to a lord, a lady, and a layabout - started dancing and shouting, "I'm the greatest rock'n'roller in the Jungle Bar."

The Money-lovers were not fond of outrageous people. They seemed hard to corrupt, and they usually ignored them. The Restaurateur enjoyed the Incredible Carpet Salesman's company, and they soon started dancing and drinking together. After dancing, the two men chatted about a man they both knew. The Incredible Carpet Salesman told the Restaurateur quite bluntly, "Oh, the Bitch is doing fine. He is feeling the pressure, these days - but who isn't darling."

Everyone laughed, then the jolly Carpet Salesman went on to tell a story about a Jewish friend who was threatening to go to the Middle East and join up with the PLO, and work for them as a lawyer.

When the MusicMan looked into the big face of the Incredible Carpet Salesman he thought to himself, "With stories like this, is it any wonder he's such a big hit with the Jungle Bar people."

Saturday night in the Jungle Bar may have changed over the years, but when people who love music get together, it is always the same. They always have fun, and they usually end up dancing the night away in some nightclub.

At that moment, someone passing by the MusicMan, at the Jungle Bar, cracked a joke about the Money-loving Clown, "They say he would give it all away tomorrow, but he can't stand the thought of someone else getting a hold of all that money."

This may be true or untrue - who knows - but King Clown wanted to be part of the wild Saturday Jungle Bar night, just like everyone else. He sent the Nodding Horseman round the bar to invite everyone back to his place for, as he put it: "A late night soiree."

As the Nodding Horseman went round the Jungle Bar, he stopped to nod at some of the characters. Then he asked them in a quiet voice, "Do you want to go to a party? King Clown's having one, come along, bring your friends, it's the place to be."

After listening to the buzz around the bar, the Incredible Carpet Salesman persuaded the Music-lovers that they should go along. As he lit a cigarette, the Incredible Carpet Salesman said to them in a casual voice, "Listen, I don't know this chap they call King Clown, but I'm sure there will be plenty of booze there."

# 3

So from the Jungle Bar to King Clown's apartment in the west end, everyone travelled by taxi or car. Naturally, the Jungle Bar people who had travelled by taxi from the bar started to congregate on the pavement outside King Clown's apartment. Just across the road, the MusicMan and his friends all sat inside the Restaurateur's car, and waited for the man who the Jungle Bar people call King Clown to arrive.

The Restaurateur, as he fiddled with the bass and treble on his modern car cassette player, noticed outside his right-hand window a figure move around in the park opposite the flats. Looking at the clock on his dashboard and seeing how late it was, the Restaurateur exclaimed, "What's she doing out in the park at this time of night?"

The MusicMan sitting in the front seat of the car looked through the driver's window. Then he told his friend in a carefree tone, "Looks like walking the dog, to me."

The Music-lovers all watched the woman's dark shadow move behind the park gate, and then along the high hedge. Ribbentrop, who was sitting in the back seat along with El Greco and the Incredible Carpet Salesman, said in a daft cultured voice, "I

believe when you own one of these large Victorian houses over there you get the privilege of using the private park, night or day."

After Ribbentrop had laughed at his own daft voice, the Incredible Carpet Salesman slapped him. Then he informed the others, in a loud voice, "Ribbentrop, the well-known Glasgow poet, has never been the same since the night he had a fight with a German car on the south side of the city."

Ribbentrop protested, "I tell you she lives over there."

The Incredible Carpet Salesman shouted, "How do you know that, Ribbentrop? You have never been out of the south side for years."

The Incredible Carpet Salesman then threatened the bard, by saying to him, that if he did not stop all his nonsense, he would get the Glasgow poet drunk, at the Clown's party, strip him naked and parade him around the room in front of all the gorgeous Jungle Bar girls. This made all the Music-lovers laugh until they saw a slow procession of cars turn off the main road, and head up to where everyone was waiting.

Ribbentrop, who now looked worried, said in a strange voice, "Look, here comes all the cats from the Jungle Bar."

King Clown jumped out of his Jaguar car, and his passenger the Nodding Horseman signalled to him - with a nod of course - that the gathering for tonight's party looked a good one. The Nodding Horseman said in a whisper to the Clown, "Good turnout, plenty of Jungle Bar people have come along."

As he walked to his flat entrance, King Clown fumbled with a bunch of keys. He suddenly stopped and, as if life had no pressure, flapped his foot and said to himself, "I think it's this one."

King Clown knowing that the Jungle Bar people were behind him opened the downstairs door. Presently, he switched on the hall light, then pointed out to the Jungle Bar people a Dali painting on the wall. Halfway up the stairs he shouted, "Dali was a Jungle man!"

Looking tragic at the top of the slender staircase, King Clown showed off another painting to the Jungle Bar people. He had bought the painting at last year's Art school exhibition. King

Clown, as he gently flapped his foot on the thick black stairway carpet, said in a matter of fact way, "*Clockwork Apples*, by Tim Price. The painting won the top prize last year."

The MusicMan noticed that King Clown looked at the painting as if he understood that even though he had bought it, he could never own it: for art is never captured, you can only receive it. So one by one, and two by two, the people from the Jungle Bar made their way upstairs and into the split level Art Deco room.

As he entered the room, King Clown threw off his black Crombie coat and, as it landed on a black leather settee, he shouted, "Boogie on down, Jungle Bar people."

Soon there must have been about one hundred people from the Jungle Bar in the Art Deco room. After the Jungle Bar people had all walked around the polished wooden floor a couple of times, the MusicMan watched them settle here and there. A thick set man whose surname was Garland, who the Jungle Bar people call Judy, waved over to the MusicMan.

King Clown loved to surprise his guests. After looking at their faces as if to sense the mood of the party, he walked over to the expensive hi-fi, and put on an obscure old-fashioned jazz track. Then he started to dance like a madman in the middle of the polished wooden floor. The Jungle Bar people loved this, and they all warmed to their host.

Being a man of business, the Gorilla telephoned a few of his business cronies around the city, "Come on over and groove on down. King Clown is having a party, and all the people from the Jungle Bar are here..."

The Nodding Horseman wondered who he was talking to, and he interrupted the Gorilla on the telephone, "Is that a woman you're talking to?"

The Gorilla - who looked half-asleep at the best of times - leaned back in the black leather chair, and told the Nodding Horseman to mind his own business, "You look after your Money-loving friends, Nodding Horseman, and I will look after mine - right."

The Nodding Horseman managed a band called the Picture People and, when the band arrived at the party, Deadbeat the drummer - who had been up for three nights playing drums - gave him a glowing report about what had been happening in the studio. “Yea, man, the songs are sounding great, man.”

The Nodding Horseman looked pleased, and he told the Picture People where to get some drinks.

King Clown continued to dance to the wacky music and, as he went by the MusicMan, he flapped his foot as if to tell him that he loved music too. All the Picture People loved this, and when Deadbeat the drummer came back from the kitchen - holding a bottle of whisky in his hand - he started to imitate drum beats by tapping the whisky bottle with his finger. “Yea, far out man, funky,” said the drummer, as he watched King Clown dance on the living room floor.

Presently, the Nodding Horseman made his way round the guests telling them all about the expensive objects of art his friend the Clown had bought. To annoy Jack 'Judy' Garland, the Nodding Horseman said to him, “See those ivory statues over there Jack - beside the fireplace - they cost a fortune.”

The Gorilla, meanwhile, infiltrated the Jungle Bar people. He told them all about the money world, and the people he knew. When a well-known name came up in the conversation, the Gorilla rejoined, “Oh yea, I know him. He’s a friend of mine. We do business together. He is all right.” Then after that he would move on and say to someone else, “Yea, I know him. We worked in London together back in the early eighties.”

When King Clown danced with the Jungle Bar girls, he flapped his famous foot like a lunatic on the polished wooden floor, and stared at them with mad Money-loving eyes. After having something to drink the MusicMan started dancing with his friends. The Incredible Carpet Salesman shouted out, as he bounced off Ribbentrop the Glasgow poet, “I’m a rock’n’roller, that’s what I am!”

The Restaurateur, who by this time had filled his smart Harley-Davidson boots with strong drink, started dancing with

some of the Jungle Bar girls. When he bumped into the MusicMan on the dance floor, he raised his eyebrows, and said to him, "Some party, eh."

King Clown loved it when his guests enjoyed themselves, but his mind at all times focused on money, and what money can do. Handy Dandy, who the Jungle Bar people say has always one eye fixed on London and the money coming out of it, told King Clown at the party, "I heard Oz has got millions to invest in writers and bands, north of the border."

King Clown replied, in his usual crafty way, "Count me in, Handy Dandy." Then he added slyly, "We will discuss it at the next Money-lovers meeting."

The Rattler popped up at this point. The Jungle Bar people say he loves to rattle people. He lit a joint and looked over at the Clown, and the man he was talking to: Handy Dandy. The Rattler man, who they say never misses any opportunity to see if he can get in on the act, and rattle a few people, went over to see what was going on. Sticking his long nose into the conversation, he said as if he were a major player in the money stakes of Glasgow these days, "Sounds interesting."

If you went to the Jungle Bar you, like all the other punters in the bar, would know that the Rattler man has had his day at being top dog in the money stakes.

King Clown laughed at him, "Ah, it's yourself, Mr Rattler."

The Rattler, although keen to find out more about what the financier Oz was up to, thought he had better wander away and come back later.

The Rattler soon found himself passing the joint to the Incredible Carpet Salesman. The Incredible Carpet Salesman quickly puffed the weed five times, before going back to dance with Ribbentrop, the well-known Glasgow poet. Then the Incredible Carpet Salesman started shouting again, "I'm a rock'n'roller!…"

However, Ribbentrop tried to play the fool. He said listlessly, "I'm tired."

But the Incredible Carpet Salesman was having none of it. He told him to go and see the Rattler man, and get some dope

inside him. However, feeling that he would not get his own way this time, the Incredible Carpet Salesman instructed Ribbentrop to join him over at the bay window, by the black leather settee, and recite one of his favourite poems to him.

Ribbentrop agreed, and once there he said in a wild poetic tone: "I see an eagle that has no wings, such a pretty thing it makes me sing. Ah, but what is there to say except, nothing on God's earth will decay. So send me love, and send me sound, forget me not my true friend, for I shall be here to the bitter end, like that eagle that has no wings…"

Ribbentrop opened his hands in supplication, then he slid down off the black leather settee onto the varnished pine floor. The Incredible Carpet Salesman immediately grabbed him by the lapels, of his old-fashioned jacket, and shouted at him, "Ribbentrop, you're a man of steel, get this down you."

The Incredible Carpet Salesman picked up a bottle of port, that just happened to be lying around, on the glass coffee table next to him, and he tried to ram it down Ribbentrop's throat.

The MusicMan laughed at his friends, and he murmured to himself, "They are unreal."

King Clown had heard through the money-vine that the MusicMan had written a musical novel. A little later that evening when the party had settled down, he sidled over to him and said in a strange tone, "Ah, Mr MusicMan, I hear you have written a little musical book. Pray tell me what it is all about?" Then he laughed at the way some people, who go to the Jungle Bar every weekend, try to make a living.

Knowing the tricks of the Money-lovers, the MusicMan smiled, then he answered him, "Yes, everything's going well. The novel is finished, and I'm just going over the songs at the moment."

Showing his serious side, King Clown's eyes moved slowly and slyly, as he tried to understand the potential of the idea in the market place. King Clown asked a few questions. Then he said in a furtive tone, "I could very well be interested in this little book of yours, you know, Mr MusicMan."

The Nodding Horseman, as usual, came over to nod that his friend King Clown meant business; and for good measure he whispered into the ear of the Restaurateur, who - although drunk - seemed interested, "He's the richest man in Glasgow, you know."

After chatting to the MusicMan about his musical novel, King Clown walked through to his bedroom, and minutes later he came back into the main room holding an acoustic guitar. The MusicMan prepared himself by thinking about what key the song was in that he was going to sing, and what chord changes it had.

However, when the Nodding Horseman turned off the hi-fi, he introduced King Clown: "Jungle Bar people, with no expense spared will you please give a warm welcome to your host - King Clown."

King Clown sang an Alice Cooper song titled *Desperado*; apparently he liked the bit in the song about the killer being a clown. The wayward vocal made everyone laugh, but when he had finished singing King Clown dropped down onto the black leather settee, beside Flower girl and Jujube, and out of breath he said to them, "It's just a little number I do now and again, you know."

King Clown, however, did not lie there for long; for he spotted the familiar figure of the woman the Jungle Bar people call Splash. He ran over to her shouting, "Splash, great woman of the night world, you must have disappointed many men just to come to my little party!"

Everyone at the party laughed as they watched King Clown kiss Splash on her forehead, then all the way down her neck to the middle of her back. Over by the bay window, the MusicMan's friends were dancing and drinking. Just then Ribbentrop turned to El Greco, and as he raised an eyebrow he said, "Funny bunch the west-enders, don't you think, darling?"

Academic El Greco watched the scene carefully, but said nothing as all the Money-lovers made a fuss of the woman who the Jungle Bar people call Splash.

It was true that Splash seemed to draw money people to her. The Nodding Horseman brought his band the Picture People over to see Splash - so that she could have a close look at them.

Deadbeat the drummer bowed, as one does to royalty. After looking at the four faces of the Picture People closely, Splash cracked a joke, "I'm not wearing my crown tonight, darling. You do not have to bow."

Splash put a coloured cigarette in a black holder and lit it. Then she asked the band: The Picture People, who the singer was.

A rustic looking nervous lad, replied cheekily, "I am."

Splash studied him hard, then she turned to King Clown, and she said in a slow business voice, "Yes, he should make you some money, all right."

When King Clown, the Nodding Horseman, and the Gorilla, heard this they all started to laugh. And it wasn't long after this that they all started singing the Money-lovers song again: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

The Nodding Horseman took great delight in nodding in the direction of the Music-lovers. Presently, he shouted, "We've got the money, and were in command - and don't you forget it."

The MusicMan wondered to himself, as he stared at the Money-lovers, "Money and people have not always been like this in this city. At one time, before the enterprise culture came along, people seemed to accept what role they had in society. The businessman was proud, not arrogant. The balance of society seemed fair and full of potential - now look at it, capitalism has gone mad. The business people now wake up in the morning and growl at the workers; they think this will make them more money. The worst thing, I believe, is the way they have tricked ordinary everyday people into believing that there is no work around. There is enough money to go around, so why don't people start asking themselves why is there not enough work to go around."

As the party raged on, the MusicMan thought of a passage from the Bible that said:

*"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Timothy: 6v10)*

The MusicMan couldn't help but think, "The world is full of Money-lovers. It is full of people who want to make money for themselves. They only believe in the me me philosophy and nothing else."

The Nodding Horseman kept the Picture People near to his Money-loving friends in the hope that they would invest in them. King Clown tried to impress the woman who the Jungle Bar people call Splash. He turned to one of the Picture People, and he said in a dainty voice, "I think I will travel to Paris next month and see the Mona Lisa," and he laughed and tapped his chest like a little drummer boy. Then he added, "And I think I'll go to the Flea market and pick up a couple of suits while I'm there."

The singer of the Picture People, who had been quiet, suddenly asked, "What are you doing buying suits with fleas in them?"

The Gorilla and the Nodding Horseman both turned round as if he had just ruined the whole night for everyone. The Gorilla stared at him as if he was about to rip his head off his shoulders. King Clown, however, found this hilarious, and he started scratching himself. Then he turned and said to the woman of the night, who went by the name of Splash, "Yes, you're right, this young man has got what it takes."

The singer of the Picture People didn't know what to say, so he laughed and took a drink of beer.

The MusicMan, although drinking and chatting with his Music-loving friends at the Clown's party, thought to himself, "If any of the Money-lovers become interested in my musical book, I will not think about the money that is involved. I will keep my eye on the target of getting the book to the good people of this land. The Money-lovers are likely to cheat me out of my share, anyway. What can money do in the face of truth? Let the Money-lovers take it to their graves. Write the truth MusicMan, so that a new generation can understand what money does to people. You may be out of work. You may be on the dole for ten years. You may be on the outer circle of life, and just a figure on an economic graph,

but words in a book can tell the truth about an evil and perverse generation."

The Nodding Horseman, who not only managed the Picture People, but had a considerable share in them as well, still looked worried, and he started nodding like the devil.

The very same man seemed to exorcise his fear by talking to Deadbeat the drummer, "King Clown knows everyone in the city," he said, and as his head went back and forward, he added, "just look at all the people who have come to his party."

There was no need to worry, for King Clown, who along with the Gorilla man had invested in the Picture People, was not about to drop the band. The Clown laughed wildly when he found out what was worrying the Nodding Horseman.

For some reason, the Restaurateur had never met Flower girl, or her friend Jujube before. The happy-go-lucky man traced the sexual outlines of their bodies for a time, as if to confirm hidden pleasures. Then he asked his friend the MusicMan, in a tipsy contrived way about them.

The MusicMan, knowing exactly what he was up to, answered him, "They are lovely girls," then after a pause, he added with a smile, "I will try and introduce you to them, later on in the evening."

Just at this point, the Incredible Carpet Salesman sprang up behind them and, as he put his fat hands on their shoulders, he looked over at Jujube, and said mischievously, "Now, that would be nice."

The Queen without a Crown made a very dramatic entrance about half-an-hour later. She pushed a drunken Jungle Bar man out of her way. He fell over the black leather settee, and ended up on the polished wooden floor.

The MusicMan smiled at her, and as their eyes met she seemed to sense the danger from the people who call themselves, the Money-lovers. As the MusicMan stared at her, he said to himself, "I wonder if tonight the Queen will forget about breaking hearts and love someone. But will she ever fall in love? Will the woman who the Jungle Bar people call the Queen without a

Crown, ever marry? Will there ever be a time when we will go together again to a late night cafe bar? Will there ever be a time again when I will look at her beautiful face, and listen to the heartbeats of love?"

The MusicMan's thoughts made him sad, and as he reflected he smiled at the image of the Queen without a Crown, that lay inside him. Then he focused on her again, and some of the Blow boys and Blow girls that follow her everywhere. "No wonder they admire her. It seems at times the light that lights up the room is coming from her."

The three well-known Money-lovers ignored the Queen without a Crown. They kept on talking about money things. However, after a few moments King Clown noticed the impression she had made on the Picture People, and he turned round to Deadbeat the drummer and, with a wink, he said slyly, "I'll throw her a line later."

The Picture People loved this, and their manager the Nodding Horseman laughed at the antics of his friend, King Clown. The Nodding Horseman said to him, as if to bolster his confidence, "She's the one for you, all right, King Clown."

The MusicMan couldn't stand looking at the Money-lovers any longer, and he turned and faced the bay window. He stared out into the dark night and looked at the park across the way, where the woman had been seen. And as he watched the night shadows move here and there, the MusicMan wondered to himself about a Clown in a business world, and about the possible success of his musical novel: "But I have tried other avenues, remember all the times you asked the Regeneration Council to help you, and how they treated you. There has been no work for ages in this town, and remember that you have put everything into your musical novel. Don't let yourself down MusicMan."

The Restaurateur noticed his friend the MusicMan deep in thought. Presently, he shook an empty can of beer in front of his eyes, and he said to him with a smile, "Another beer, MusicMan?"

As if it would have been bad manners to say no, the MusicMan replied,"Yes," automatically.

After a minute or two, the Restaurateur wandered through the Jungle Bar people, towards the split-level kitchen at the far end of the Art Deco room. The MusicMan watched the Jungle Bar people party. He smiled to himself: "You always find them the same way. They are like one big happy family."

Not faraway in the pack the MusicMan could see the Incredible Carpet Salesman chatting up Jujube, "Listen Jujube, let's run away together to the South of France. I've got a mate, who's got a place there…"

Jujube smiled, but kept on dancing, "Have you."

Meanwhile, over at the fireplace the Money-lovers were doing their thing. The Gorilla was telling a young Jungle Bar girl to jump the fence and become a Money-lover, "Listen, money can get you everything. I'm thinking about buying a new car, and a new suit next week, and I am also looking for a house in the country. Think money, Jungle Bar girl, it is the only way to live."

The Gorilla tilted his head back as if to see the reaction money made, in young Jungle eyes, when it turned itself to material things like: cars, houses, and clothes. Not faraway from the young Jungle Bar girl, King Clown - with the devil in his heart and lust in his eyes - teased the woman who the people from the Jungle Bar call Splash. He said to her, as he flapped his famous foot, "Tell me, Splash, do you believe in sex before marriage?"

Splash knew King Clown from the old days, and she knew how to handle all his moods and eccentricities, "My prices are going up, you know," she said, as a smile crossed her pointed face.

Splash lit another coloured cigarette and, as she blew the smoke out in the direction of the Jungle Bar people, she told King Clown in a posh voice, "Why don't you go and grab yourself a nice little Jungle Bar girl for the night."

Most of the Jungle Bar people ignored the Money-lovers. They thought they were out of their heads on money-love all the time. Jack 'Judy' Garland didn't like them at all; in fact he hated them. Judy turned to the MusicMan and, after crushing an empty can of beer in one hand, he said to him, "I tell you, MusicMan, when the revolution comes that crowd over there will be the first

up against the wall. And I'll be the one to fire the shots - don't you worry about that."

Judy, the MusicMan could see, had had a few drinks; but it did make the MusicMan think about the fashion of money-love around at the moment. Jack 'Judy' Garland added emphatically, "I mean who would have thought it possible, MusicMan, that socialism would go out of fashion in a socialist state; and who would have thought it possible that foreign influences would have an impact on our great country."

The MusicMan smiled at Judy. Then he heard him say, "And that's why these voracious Money-lovers are having a field day. Who would have thought it possible, MusicMan?"

Jack 'Judy' Garland, the well-known agent provocateur of the Jungle Bar scene, cursed the Money-lovers again. After another can of beer he spat on the wooden floor of King Clown's apartment, and he blazed, "Down with money-love!"

As Jack 'Judy' Garland got drunk, the MusicMan laughed and thought to himself, "Judy is not a member of any political party - so there is absolutely no chance of him changing the fate of our time. I don't think it really matters, anyway, who runs the country. There will always be mad people around who will shout and tell you that money is king, money is god."

El Greco loved to wind-up Judy. When he bumped into the agent provocateur, not far from the host's living room door, El Greco stopped him and asked him a question, "Tell me, Jack, how would you put the people of this land back to work?"

Jack Judy Garland did have an idea, and was just about to explain his theory to academic El Greco; however El Greco spotted Flower girl at the door - she had been out for a breath of air - and at that moment the political animal's instincts seemed to blossom into love. He grabbed the pretty young thing by the arm, and asked her in a deep voice, "Can I have the next dance, Flower girl?"

Jujube gave Flower girl a warning look. And as Flower girl walked away into the pack of Jungle Bar dancers with El Greco,

Jujube whispered to her, "You watch these foreigners, Flower girl, you don't know where they've been."

The happy-go-lucky Restaurateur, who by this time was wild with drink, started dancing on his own. When a Jungle Bar girl came up to him and kissed him on the side of his cheek, she must have left a lipstick trace of love on his face; for when she disappeared the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur went looking for her in the pack like a dog searching for its ball.

A little later on, when the MusicMan bumped into him in the middle of the pack, the Restaurateur said to him, "Have you seen her?"

The MusicMan did not know what he was on about, and anyway he had spotted Flower girl standing all alone by the fireside, and he moved over and spoke to her.

Flower girl, who had just finished dancing with El Greco, smiled at the MusicMan. When she kissed him, the MusicMan gently put his hand along the nape of her neck and inside her auburn hair. In a warm loving breath he said softly to her, "Watch your flower doesn't fall out of your hair, Flower girl."

After the dance, they both walked away from the Jungle Bar dancers, in the middle of King Clown's flat, and searched for something to drink. As Flower girl gently picked up a bottle of wine from the table in the split-level Art Deco kitchen, she said to the MusicMan cautiously, "Don't you think the Money-lovers are a weird lot?"

The MusicMan did not know how to reply. He had no experience in business, but because of his musical book he sighed, as if to understand the future, and he wondered to himself, "Yes, it looks as if I will soon be involved with a bunch of Money-lovers."

A knowing smile crossed his face as he gave her a diplomatic answer, "Well, Flower girl, they say it takes all sorts to make up a world," and he lifted his glass of wine, and smiled into Flower girl's light blue eyes.

Flower girl noticed he was acting clever, and she warned him, "You keep clear of them MusicMan. They will take your book and make it a bestseller, and you won't get a penny from it."

There was a pause as if the lead weight of truth sank between them. Then the MusicMan reassured her that he knew what he was doing. Flower girl, who has chosen an aesthetic way of life, tried to convince him that he did not know what he was doing, "Nothing good has ever come from money, and nothing ever will, MusicMan."

The MusicMan thought for a moment, "She has a point, for is this not the age of material madness? Is this not an era where the rich tell the middle classes to keep people out of work, so that they can have all the money for themselves? Money we want, money we crave…"

The MusicMan knew she was upset, and he told her, "Right okay, Flower girl, I promise you, I will watch what I'm doing."
The man who writes books and songs tried to understand the contradiction of someone who loves art, yet at the same time loathes the people in the market place who love money.

After a drink of wine and another long gaze into the wonderful light blue eyes of Flower girl, the MusicMan said, "It really isn't anything new for Money-lovers to spot someone and try to exploit them - is it now, Flower girl."

With a gentle nod Flower girl agreed and, as she looked into her glass of wine, I think she saw a future out there somewhere for our friend the MusicMan; and God willing she hoped that the songs from his book would find a place in the hearts of the everyday people.

As the MusicMan thought about the possibilities for his novel, he watched some of the G77 Jungle Bar girls dance at the Clown's party. He laughed at the way someone in the Jungle Bar had named them after their wealthy postcode number. He also remembered many of them from secondary school, "At one time, I thought they were all related to our glorious Queen; however, when I got to know them, I soon discovered that most of them were the kind of people who would not give you a nod in the desert."

The MusicMan laughed to himself, "G77 girls are definitely not from heaven."

Just then everyone stopped dancing and drinking and looked over towards the bay window. The Incredible Carpet Salesman had managed to get Ribbentrop the Glasgow poet to stand on top of a glass table, and do an impression of a well-known popular drag queen.

All the cats from the Jungle Bar started clapping and chanting for the Glasgow poet to do the famous Ribbentrop striptease. The Incredible Carpet Salesman told Ribbentrop that if he didn't obey the Jungle Bar people, he would see to it that there would be no more Jungle Bar nights out for him to look forward to. Following this the drunken Carpet Salesman, as if annoyed, tugged at his trousers and said to him, "Come on, Ribbentrop, show them how to rock'n'roll."

The party finished around four in the morning, and the MusicMan and his friends all headed home to the south side of the city. However, when everyone had gone, the Money-lovers held a special meeting, and they discussed the possibility of becoming involved with the man the Jungle Bar people call the MusicMan. King Clown thought they should all go to London and see the financier named Mr Oz, and get some money from him. In a cultured voice King Clown said, "Yes, this project seems interesting - very interesting, indeed."

So a decision was taken that night, just before the sun came up to shine once more on the streets of Glasgow, to make the MusicMan a star.

# 4

Two weeks later while cruising around the town in his fancy camouflaged old-fashioned army jeep, the Gorilla spotted the MusicMan standing outside the record store. The Gorilla pulled over to the kerb, rolled down his window, and he shouted, "Hey, Mr MusicMan, how are you doing?"

After a brief chat about some of the Jungle Bar characters, and what they had been up to, the Gorilla said, "Send me that musical book of yours, MusicMan, then come and see me. No appointments are necessary now that we have moved into our new office inside the television station."

The Gorilla roared with laughter once more, as if he could not quite believe how a freelance Money-loving bunch could get on in the modern world.

Even when the camouflaged old-fashioned jeep drove away the MusicMan could still hear the Gorilla laughing and, as he stared at the number plate, the man of music thought to himself, "Yes, someone at last is taking an interest in my musical book, thank goodness."

The MusicMan had heard the rumours around the Jungle Bar about the Gorilla man, and the rest of the Money-lovers; but he got the impression that his spoken words were now starting to move invisible wheels somewhere. Even though he knew they were

a bunch of rogues, he would work for them, so that the people could enjoy his musical book.

The following Monday the MusicMan got up early, and headed for the television centre where the Money-lovers had their freelance office. When he arrived at the centre, the MusicMan half-expected to see a plaque on the wall outside the main building, saying: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

The office block that housed the Money-lovers inside the television centre had a strange feel to it. In fact, it made the MusicMan wonder about money people and why they are attracted to the minimalist style. Then he remembered something he had once read: "Minimalism reduces creativity to a basic minimum, and hides everything else."

Glancing over at a pale abstract painting on the wall in the foyer, the MusicMan reflected, "You would think someone would try and make the reception area a welcoming place. Looking at the half-circle counter in front of him the MusicMan sighed, "Well, the red-faced commissionaire, who has a plastic hand, looks real enough."

Hearing who he was looking for the commissionaire, with a wink, exclaimed to the MusicMan, "Ah, the man they call the Gorilla." Then after a laugh and a wondrous look, he added, 'I will waken him up for you, sir."

The MusicMan looked around him again, then word came back from the red-faced commissionaire, "Just go downstairs sir. It's the first door on your left."

The man of music thought to himself, "They say a man's office is an extension of himself; I wonder what the Gorilla's place of work is like?"

The MusicMan went down the stairs and at the bottom there was a door, then another waiting area painted in light blue - again in a minimalist style. Directly opposite the entrance he could see four po-faced architects in conference. One of them, a young man in a dark blue sleeveless pullover and white shirt, looked up at that

moment, and stared over at the MusicMan. Then he went back to reading a small white paper in front of him.

Just then, a young lady secretary came out of an office, carrying a plastic red kettle in her hand, and she walked towards the MusicMan. For some reason she stopped, and asked the MusicMan, "Are you into see the Gorilla?"

The MusicMan couldn't believe everyone called him that, "Yes, is he in?"

The bright breezy secretary pointed to a door at the right-hand side of her. Then she walked away from him, saying to herself as she went, "It's hard work putting on the kettle every day for these thirsty professionals - really it is."

Just as the MusicMan got ready to enter the office the door suddenly opened. A man in a long navy blue trench coat, white shirt and red speckled tie, came out. He had shoulder length brown hair, and his classical face was full of anger and betrayal. Behind him, the MusicMan could see the face of the Gorilla. The Gorilla seemed angry too.

As the man in the navy trench coat went by the MusicMan, the Gorilla shouted after him, "You will never work for me again. You're finished!"

In the excitement, the Gorilla man started dancing about, as if someone was about to throw something at him. The two secretaries by this time had stopped work inside the Gorilla's office. They were now looking at each other and wondering about the future.

The man with the classical face stopped walking and, as he turned to look at the MusicMan, he said with pride in his voice, "There is more dignity on the dole, son - than working for a Money-loving galoot like him."

The man then put his hand inside his dark blue trench coat pocket, and brought out a handful of coins, and threw them at the feet of the Gorilla man. The MusicMan understood this to be a way of pointing out a corrupt Money-lover to other people.

As the man walked up the stairs and out into what seemed a normal world of good and evil, the MusicMan walked into a seedy

legitimate place of work where the telephones were ringing, and the two secretaries were talking to each other about the man who had just left their office.

The Gorilla grunted a few times and, after staring faraway into space, he shouted, "You get them jobs on TV, and they talk about their books and about their plays - and that's all the thanks you get for it."

One of the secretaries - a nice roly-poly girl - picked up a ringing telephone, then looked at the man who the Jungle Bar people call the MusicMan. The Gorilla man looked over at her and asked who it was, and hearing a name he knew he took the call.

The MusicMan noticed that it did not take the Gorilla long to get back into his stride. As soon as he picked up the phone, he started swearing at the man on the other end of it, "Listen to me - you tell him from me that if he is not in my office by two o'clock tomorrow - he's finished. Do you hear me?"

The MusicMan had heard it all before, and as he sat down he tried to focus on what he was going to say to the Gorilla man, as regards his musical book, and how to avoid saying the obvious thing like: "Now listen here, Mr Gorilla, if you want to be involved with me and my musical book, you really must calm down. You will have to conduct yourself in a reasonable manner. I mean you can't go around swearing at people and insulting them - now can you. Oh, and by the way, before publication, I would like a signed contract and some time off for a holiday, and of course a large advance."

This light-hearted observation made the MusicMan relax. And as he focused on the man the Jungle Bar people call the Gorilla, he got the impression that he would have to open up the dialogue about the potential of the project.

The MusicMan felt that the Gorilla worked by tracing the creative spirit. He had noticed in the past that when things appeared ineffectual, the Gorilla would waken up and dominate the situation. The MusicMan picked up a pen that just happened to be lying in front of him on the desk, and waited for an

opportunity to speak. When the Gorilla put down the telephone, he asked him, "Did you get a chance to read my musical novel, that I sent to you?"

The Gorilla man seemed to panic, and this made the MusicMan wonder if he could read. The Gorilla mumbled, "Yes, I read the book." Then he immediately went on to talk about movements and markets and media people: "They all have to be satisfied, before the project can even be thought about," he concluded, in a sonorous tone.

When everything seemed lost and forlorn and never to be realised, the MusicMan thought to himself, "Right let's go."

However, a strange unseen agreement seemed to take place just then, and although no schedule or timetable, or even plan, became apparent, the MusicMan felt a spark lit a fuse and a wheel turned somewhere.

In a strange way, the Gorilla said, "Yea, King Clown loves the idea of making the book into a film and putting it on one of his TV film channels. But first of all we will have to go to London and see a man named Oz. Mr Oz works for a big financial company."

After the bizarre meeting had finished, the Gorilla asked the MusicMan, casually, "Did King Clown send you any tickets for this year's Money-lovers Ball?"

The MusicMan answered him in a friendly way, "Yes, and I nearly lost one of them. A musical student of mine, just last week, took a fancy to one of the tickets."

As the Gorilla man roared with laughter, the MusicMan noticed for the first time kindness - through comedy - come into his small dark farcical eyes. A few more minutes went by, then the Gorilla man stood up and said, "Right, Mr MusicMan, we shall be in touch with you."

# 5

When the weekend world came round again the MusicMan took it easy; on Friday he visited a friend, and on Saturday afternoon the MusicMan decided to take his watercolour paints to the park and paint a picture. Sitting on a park bench the MusicMan looked over towards the pond, and for a moment he gazed at the beautiful old church that lay in the background. Then he started sketching the scene with a soft pencil.

Not long after he had painted the sky, the church, and the steeple, a group of children appeared behind him. They all looked over his shoulder to see what lay on the board in front of him.

Out of the blue, a young voice cried, "Look at that!"

Another said, "That's brilliant."

The MusicMan turned round, and when he saw four young faces he smiled at them: "Bless my heart, what have we got here."

Their young faces he could see did not question art. The three young lads, and a girl, all just stared at the representation in front of them. This made the MusicMan think about how grown-ups would be better off, and more fulfilled, if they just let their young heart's lookout at the world in the same way.

The MusicMan talked to them about football, until one of the lads told him about a murder in the park last week. After they

had walked away, and after a few more brush strokes covering the rim of the pond and the outer edges of the park, the MusicMan started to think about the characters who call themselves Money-lovers, and who go to the Jungle Bar every weekend. But he soon lost himself in the direction of the painting once again.

A few moments later, he picked up a newspaper, he had bought from the local shop, and started to read about a famous singer who had died in a plane crash. Beside this article a heading read: 'Local entrepreneur buys TV company.' When he had read the story in full, he said to himself, "Well, well, well, here he is. The man who the Jungle Bar people call King Clown, and the press call: 'The modern-day Rockefeller,' maybe my musical book will be published after all. And maybe I will make a living from it?"

At around six o'clock that night, a strange voice said to the MusicMan on the telephone, "Yes, tonight is the night of the Money-lovers Ball."

The MusicMan suddenly realised the voice on the other end of the line belonged to his good friend the Restaurateur. The Restaurateur loved wild nights like this. He didn't care who organised them. He promised his friend the MusicMan that by the end of the night he would be wild with drink, and heading somewhere with a strange young Jungle Bar girl on his arm.

A time of nine-thirty was arranged for them to meet. The MusicMan did not think his friend would be there on time. He knew him too well for that: "If the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur says nine-thirty - he really means half past eleven, or even midnight."

At ten minutes past twelve a horn sounded outside the apartment of the MusicMan, and after he had switched off the main light, the MusicMan walked outside. Before opening the taxi door, the MusicMan looked up at the late night summer sky above him, where all the stars augured well for tomorrow and many a hopeful year to come.

As the private taxi made its way to the city, by the main road, the MusicMan lit a cigarette. At the crossroads, he looked out of

the window on the Restaurateur's side, and he noticed youths fighting on the pavement, right in front of the bus stop. The Restaurateur saw them too and, seeing that they were young teenage girls, he said in a shocked voice, "Glasgow's getting worse. Did you see that, MusicMan?"

The taxi driver, full of cynicism, looked in his mirror and, after he overtook a late night bus that was heading back into the city, he said profoundly, "It's funny how the instincts of humans can only be understood when they start to rip each other apart."

This flippant comment made the MusicMan's mind go back to a night in Glasgow when he saw a taxi driver pull a young lad by the shirt collar off the road, and onto the pavement. The young man had been in a fight and was out cold. But the hackney driver didn't seem to care; he just jumped back in his cab, and shot off in the direction of the south side taking his hire home.

Pulling up to the traffic lights the private taxi driver asked the MusicMan and the Restaurateur where they wanted to go. On hearing the instruction, he nodded, then said in a rough voice, "Yea, life is a jungle all right."

The Jungle Bar looked pretty busy when the MusicMan and his good friend the Restaurateur arrived. Presently, the dancing barman served them and, with a nod and a laugh, he indicated the whereabouts of Doctor High in the pack. The MusicMan laughed as he watched his show business friend tease some young Jungle Bar girls, as they asked him for some love pills.

El Greco, who had just bought himself a bottle of American beer, shouted over to the MusicMan and the Restaurateur, "Good to see you my friends! Then he added, "What do you want to drink?"

Doctor High came over and asked his friends if they were all right for complimentary tickets for tonight's Money-lovers Ball. With a wink he said, "I have a few buckshee tickets, here."

Doctor High then held six tickets, for the Money-lovers Ball, open like a fan in front of himself, and he danced for his Music-loving friends to show them that he had beaten the system once again. However, unknown to him at this point, Reilly O'Reilly, a

wide Irish man, who went to the Jungle Bar at weekends for amour and drink, grabbed two tickets from the fan. Then he smartly disappeared into the Jungle Bar crowd.

Doctor High smiled at his friend the MusicMan, and as he opened his brown eyes wide, he said philosophically, "Oh well, you win some and you lose some - I guess."

Flower girl, sitting at the bar with Jujube, looked away from the theft, and she said to her friend, "Tell me, Jujube, is this the first Money-lovers Ball you have had a ticket for?"

Jujube nodded, then asked excitedly, "What do they do there, Flower girl?"

Flower girl nearly choked on her drink. They get drunk, and they make complete fools of themselves. After laughing she added, "It is worth going along just to see the sights."

El Greco had never been to a Money-lovers Ball either, and after overhearing what Flower girl had to say, he asked the MusicMan, in his deep and impressive voice, "Is this correct, MusicMan?"

The MusicMan tried to keep a straight face, as he replied, "Well, it's their night after all." After laughing, he added, "I think they feel that they have made enough money, and it's now time to let their hair down and go wild."

Doctor High interrupted the MusicMan, he said in jest, "Just last week King Clown was telling me that he was starting to feel under pressure because of all the people he has made redundant."

This made everyone laugh: for it was well known, in the Jungle Bar, that the Money-lovers who go there have no conscience when it comes to putting people on the dole.

Doctor High, the oldest Music-lover in the Jungle Bar, started making people laugh with more stories about life and it's illusions, "I know this pretty young thing who pushes her chest up to her chin, and thinks she's gorgeous."

Music-lovers love nothing better than to listen to music, and after the dancing barman had put on some loud rock'n'roll songs they all started clapping and dancing.

Jujube noticed Reilly O'Reilly passing her - he had been dancing with a Blow girl with blonde hair - and quick as a flash she turned to the MusicMan, and said to him, "Watch this," and she casually put her hand inside his jacket pocket and brought out the two tickets that he had snatched from Doctor High a few moments ago. Jujube smiled at her friend Flower girl, and she said to her in a worldly way, "It's so easy to win and lose in the Jungle Bar in the space of two minutes."

When Reilly O'Reilly, the wide Irishman, realised what had happened, he protested, "I got these two tickets off a mate of mine."

Jujube laughed and as she got off her bar stool, she told him in a comic Irish accent, "Get on your bike, Reilly O'Reilly."

By this time, the Money-lovers were starting to gather at the Jungle Bar. Old Lickspittle, an old financier, and a few of his cronies were drinking champagne, and cracking jokes, about some of the young sexy Jungle Bar girls. Old Lickspittle watched a young thing in denims and black boots stare at the bottle of bubbly in the ice bucket, on top of the Jungle Bar. He said to her teasingly, "Would you like a little glass of bubbly, my dear?"

The Jungle Bar girl looked at him. Then she told him what he could do with his bottle. The Money-lovers around Old Lickspittle, loved this, and they mocked him for trying it on with one so young.

A man who the Jungle Bar people call Giuseppe Sapone (Joe Soap) had been standing at the Jungle Bar for some time now, trying to make up his mind as to what he should drink. When everyone had been served, the dancing barman had some fun with him.

Leaning on the bar the dancing barman said to him in a comic Italian voice, "Hey, Giuseppe Sapone, what do you want, eh? You wanna vodka, I gotta vodka. You wanna whisky, I gotta whisky. You wanna beer, I gotta beer; but Giuseppe Sapone, just by looking at your young a face, I can tell you don't a know what you wanna to drink. Last week you come in a here, you drink a beer. The week a before that you drink a vodka, and the week a

before that you drink a vino. Hey, Giuseppe Sapone, just a pick a something you like eh, and don't give me a hard time."

Giuseppe heard the Jungle Bar people laughing at him, and he ordered an American beer. The dancing barman looked pleased. Poor old Giuseppe, turned and walked away. The dancing barman shouted to him, in the same Italian comic voice as before, "That's a good a fellow, Giuseppe, you come back and see me later, eh; and I see what I can do for you. I know a nice a Jungle Bar girl - you might a like her."

The Money-lovers all around the bar roared with laughter, and Old Lickspittle raised his glass, and said to someone, near by, "Oh, the perverse fun of it all."

Some of the Jungle Bar girls liked Giuseppe; they seemed to respond to his appealing Latin eyes, in the same way a mother does to a child. Just then a Jungle Bar girl told a Money-lover to leave him alone, "Shut yur mouth, yah full-time idiot," she said to him, in an angry tone.

Just at this point, the Rattler appeared at the Jungle Bar, and joined his Money-loving friends. Old Lickspittle's boozy red face smiled and, as he poured out a glass of champagne for him, he said, "Looking forward to the Ball, Mr Rattler?"

The Rattler gladly accepted a glass of bubbly, and he replied in a comic upper class tone, "I certainly am, old boy," then he asked Old Lickspittle about an old Money-lover he hadn't seen for awhile.

Because it was the Money-lovers Ball tonight, the Jungle Bar was full to the gunwales. There were many people in the bar tonight who had not been seen for a while around the Jungle Bar scene. The Money-lovers, dressed in dinner suits and bow ties, seemed to be scattered all over the bar.

It was probably because of the crowds of people in the Jungle Bar - who were dancing and jumping about - that a man, who it must be said had far too much to drink, spilt a drink over a hot-tempered looking Latin woman. She threw a drink in his face, and then the whole place was in an uproar.

Presently, the MusicMan and his friends had to make way for the bouncers to drag the man out of the Jungle Bar. In the melee, the MusicMan fell into the arms of Jujube and, with his face close-up to her face, she asked him softly, "Have you got a ticket for the silly Money-lovers Ball, MusicMan?"

The MusicMan smiled at her, then he kissed her pretty red cheek, and whispered, "Yes, and will you dance with me later, Jujube."

Jujube, for some reason, looked over at some of the old Money-lovers at the Jungle Bar. Then she told the MusicMan, "That old cocaine addict, Lickspittle, told me earlier on that the Ball had been cancelled, and that they were collecting all the tickets back in."

Knowing that Money-lovers are always up to their tricks, the MusicMan worried about some of the young ladies in the Jungle Bar scene. The man of music, at that moment, offered Jujube and Flower girl some advice, as he stood at the famous Jungle Bar in Glasgow, "Just ignore them and their money ways. It's the best way."

Feeling that something else should be added at this point, the MusicMan told them a story that he had heard in the Jungle Bar a few years ago: "They say Old Lickspittle turned in his sleep one night, you know. He had been just an ordinary everyday sort of fellow, with a job, a mortgage, a wife, and a car. Then all of a sudden he started hating people, and loving money; friends, relations and family all had to go if they did not have plenty of money."

Jujube and Flower girl laughed at him, and Jujube said, "And just look at him now."

The MusicMan looked over towards Old Lickspittle, but it was the Queen without a Crown who caught his eye, "Just look at her. She looks absolutely beautiful with her long blonde hair and perfect white skin."

The woman the Jungle Bar people call Splash caught the MusicMan looking at the Queen without a Crown and, behind the Queen's back, Splash showed him that she had understood his

velvet thoughts. She put her tongue in her cheek, and moved it around slowly, then she smiled at him.

Flower girl and Jujube thought this very funny. After laughing at the MusicMan, Jujube said, "You'd better watch out, MusicMan, you might end up with the Queen of the night instead of the one without a Crown."

The dancing barman changed the tempo of the music to suit the party atmosphere of the bar; this, however, upset the Incredible Carpet Salesman. He stopped dancing with Ribbentrop the poet, and shouted at the dancing barman, "It's rock'n'roll we want - not jazz or funk!"

Just then, the Queen without a Crown - who was standing not far away from the Jungle Bar dancers - looked over at the MusicMan and smiled. The Restaurateur squeezed the MusicMan's arm to remind him, "Remember, MusicMan, a heart can only be broken once - and your heart has already been broken," and he beamed. The happy-go-lucky Restaurateur thought this very funny and as he laughed, he danced from side to side, and advised his friend, "Go for it, MusicMan, go for it."

At the bar stood two men who were called by the people of the Jungle Bar the two Baldies. The Baldies were great lady killers. Certainly, they were forever boasting about this or that conquest. The Restaurateur knew one of the two Baldies and, being a bit of a lady-killer himself, he started talking to him.

One of the two Baldies said to him, "Listen, Mr Restaurateur, you should have seen the bird I pulled the other night. She had enormous breasts, and her legs went up to here."

The Restaurateur looked at the invisible legs in relation to the bar. Then he grabbed the man's hand and, as he shook it, he cried out, "I know - I took her out last week."

The Money-lovers Ball started at one in the morning, so naturally the Jungle Bar stayed open a little later, and tried to catch a little extra trade. It came as no surprise to the Jungle Bar people when King Clown arrived, along with the Nodding Horseman, and the Gorilla, at midnight.

King Clown, even though it was a balmy late summer's night, still had on his black Crombie coat, and when he came into the bar he flapped his famous foot - not once but twice - at the sight of so many Money-lovers, then he laughed for no apparent reason.

Mr Rattler ran over to him shouting, "It's a good turnout for the Ball, King Clown - all the tickets have been sold!"

The Nodding Horseman nodded at King Clown, as if to say, "See I told you," then they all headed to the bar like a group of gangsters in an old black and white movie.

Old Lickspittle shouted over to his Money-loving friends that he would buy the drinks tonight. With tired and sly eyes King Clown looked around him at the people who were inside the Jungle Bar and, after a few seconds, he said to the Rattler man in a serious voice, "So, everything is all right, is it."

The Rattler reassured him once more that everything was all right, and then the man who is sometimes known in the Jungle Bar as the dirty old man of Europe, added, "Yes, everything is going nicely, and when I get to the Ball, later on tonight, I'm going to rattle a few people," and he laughed a strange laugh.

The Nodding Horseman nodded that this behaviour would be acceptable at the Money-lovers Ball. As old Lickspittle passed the Clown his drink, he asked him casually, "So what have you been up to, King Clown?"

King Clown in a pretentious way twirled his earlobe. Then he quoted a famous saying, "I've been buying as much land as possible. They say they're not making it anymore."

All the Money-lovers at the Jungle Bar loved this crazy talk, and they raised their glasses to the man who - only a few years ago - had set up the organisation they now all belonged to. Old Lickspittle started singing: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save," then the others joined in.

A famous bar had come up for sale in the city, and King Clown told his cronies that he liked it. Flapping his foot on the Jungle Bar floor, he exclaimed in a loud voice, "I think Bar Bizarre could make us a few more pennies, gentlemen."

Old Lickspittle gave him the low down on the asking price, and how much money the bar took last year. King Clown listened and, as his eyes lit up, he muttered to himself, "Yes, it could very well be the next trendy place in town."

As the Money-lovers talked at the Jungle Bar, King Clown spotted a young lady who the Jungle Bar people call Sal the Wonder Gal. King Clown liked her well-bred face. Turning away from the Money-lovers at the Jungle Bar, he asked her in a daft voice, "Oh excuse me, but are you a movie star?"

When he shrieked with laughter, Sal and her friends became a little afraid of him; however, after the Clown flapped his foot a couple of times they seemed to relax. Not long after this he bought them some drinks.

King Clown was amazed to hear that Sal and her friends had never heard of the Glasgow Money-lovers, and the Ball that was to take place later that night. Needing no encouragement the Clown opened his fat wallet and, as he twirled his earlobe with a finger and thumb again, he said to them, "Well, ladies, I think I may have a few - how you say – buckshee tickets, here."

He then handed four tickets to Sal the Wonder Gal. As the exchange took place, King Clown flapped his famous foot four times on the Jungle Bar floor. Making a face at Sal, he promised her: "And later on at the Ball, I will buy everyone a drink at the bar."

At this point, bang on cue, the Nodding Horseman stuck his head in and, of course before saying anything, he nodded, "Yes, ladies, he is the richest man in the city."

The young ladies were very much impressed, and Sal the Wonder Gal said cheekily, "Right, see you there, then."

A lot of the well-known characters in the Jungle Bar thought the Money-lovers had a dog's philosophy to life, and when they heard that King Clown had given away free tickets to Sal the Wonder Gal and her friends, they openly said, "They charge us plenty for our tickets, and then they give them away free to perfect strangers."

This sentiment, however, did not seem to worry the Money-lovers. At the bar, the Nodding Horseman got fed up listening to Old Lickspittle's jokes. He turned to him and, in an angry voice, he said, "Lickspittle it's a wonder you are allowed to hang around with us. You're an old bore."

Some hawkers, who were always in the Jungle Bar at the weekend, started to laugh at Old Lickspittle. They loved it when the old Money-lovers were slagged off by the younger ones.

King Clown chatted to as many people as he could at the bar, and when he came across the beautiful Queen without a Crown he was surprised to hear that she - and her Blow boys and Blow girls - had not received any tickets for the Ball. King Clown promptly handed her six tickets, and as he touched her delicate hand, he tried to impress upon her the importance of money in a world of fools.

Not long after this he brought out a wad of notes, and asked if he could buy the Queen and her friends some drinks. The Queen without a Crown did not take him seriously, and she laughed and told him to put away his money. King Clown looked annoyed, and replied in a strange voice, "In the Jungle Bar they say, you know, if you have got it, you should flaunt it," and then he laughed.

Sensing that she was in a good mood the well-known Clown of the Jungle Bar became outrageous, and he put his arm around her waist. Looking up at her with daft eyes, he said suggestively, "Let's run away and get married." Just for fun he flapped his famous foot on the Jungle Bar floor three times, saying to the Queen, "One for silver, one for gold, and one for a heartbreaking story never to be told."

King Clown would not be put off, and he asked her again, "Now, what would the Queen of the Jungle Bar and her friends like to drink?"

The beautiful Queen told him, "Really, it's fine, Doctor High is getting me a drink."

At the side of her, Doctor High turned round and handed the Queen her drink. Then he opened his big brown eyes wide to show the King that he too loved the Queen without a Crown.

King Clown stormed off saying to the Nodding Horseman, "I've got more money than any of them."

Knowing that this was true, the Nodding Horseman tried to soothe his friend, by saying to him, "She'll come round, she is just playing hard to get - that's all."

King Clown, however, did not see it that way. In a dark and desperate voice he told the Nodding Horseman, "One night, I'll capture her, ply her full of drink and drugs, and break her pretty red heart - just you wait and see."

The madness in his words made the Clown scream. He pushed the Nodding Horseman out of the way, and walked away from the Jungle Bar and into the pack of dancers.

Meanwhile, in the middle of the pack the MusicMan and his friends were enjoying themselves. They had formed a circle, and were clapping and dancing to the Jungle Bar beat.

When King Clown came across the Music-lovers he seemed to cheer up, and he started flapping his foot and clapping to the music.

Jujube turned to Flower girl, and she said to her, "Look at the way he dances, he reminds me of my grandfather."

This annoyed King Clown, and he soon walked back to the Money-lovers and, when he stood at the Jungle Bar with his cronies once more, the Clown turned to the Gorilla man, and he promised him: "I'll slip her a Mickey Finn later."

King Clown opened his hand and showed the Gorilla man pink pills, that he said he had bought from a friend of his at the Jungle Bar last week. The Gorilla roared with laughter. Then he said calmly, "Should do the trick, all right."

About ten minutes later, King Clown walked over to Flower girl, and Jujube, and he asked them in an innocent voice, "Would you like a little drink, ladies?"

As King Clown waited for them to answer, he tapped his chest like a little drummer boy, and made a daft face. Flower girl

looked at Jujube as if to search her thoughts. The two Jungle Bar girls had heard many stories about King Clown: like the time he had locked a woman in his house for a week.

With a wonderful smile on her delicate face, Flower girl declined, "No thanks, we are fine."

King Clown looked angry. He put the pink pills back in his dark Crombie coat pocket, and wandered away promising himself that he would get his own back when he got to the Money-lovers Ball.

The Gorilla apparently knew something about one of the girls. He said to his boss secretly, "Jujube, smokes the ganja," and nodded, like the Nodding Horseman. Then full of dark thoughts, he added, "The information may come in handy in the future - don't you think."

King Clown looked at the Gorilla man, and then muttered to him some thing about not liking young free spirits around the Jungle Bar: "What, flowers and sweets, I have never heard anything so daft." Then he screamed, "They want to get into money!"

Money-lovers never miss a trick to make a few pounds. Hearing the conversation die around him, King Clown walked around the bar to see if he could sell a few more tickets, for the Money-lovers Ball, to some of the Jungle Bar people. By this time, however, most people had either got a ticket, or were thinking about going home.

After about five minutes King Clown stood beside some happy tramps, peddlers, pushers, and playboy capitalists, and he looked around the Jungle Bar to see if he could spot an unhappy face that did not have a ticket for the Ball.

One young lady who did not have a ticket for the Money-lovers Ball, and who went by the name of Sugarpuss, sat all alone at the far end of the Jungle Bar. Later on that night in the bar, King Clown approached her, and said in an upbeat tone, "You're not looking your usual happy self tonight, Sugarpuss - what's up?"

Sugarpuss puckered her lips as if distracted, and she said, "Fed up."

King Clown looked away, as if not to cause confusion. Then he said to her, "Would you like a ticket for the Ball, Sugarpuss?"

Sugarpuss's eyes lit up, and she cried, "Oh yes, I would love one."

Then her face fell from high to low in seconds: for she had no money, and she added, "But I'm skint."

Money-lovers in the Jungle Bar do not just operate in coins and notes and, after talking to her about the TV station he had just bought, King Clown struck a deal with the woman who the Jungle Bar people call Sugarpuss, that cannot be repeated here in print.

Looking pleased with himself, King Clown came back to his friends feeling happy, and he told the Nodding Horseman what he had been up to. The Nodding Horseman, nodded like the devil, and he cried out, as he danced on the spot, "You're unbelievable!"

The Rattler understood this philosophy, and he complimented King Clown on his handling of the situation. Then he put forward his own thoughts, "Yes, when you get the chance, you have got to take advantage of them."

To promote the ways of the leader, the Nodding Horseman spread the story around the Jungle Bar. The Nodding Horseman turned to the MusicMan and he told him in a furtive tone, "King Clown's made an arrangement with Sugarpuss."

As the two grown men looked at each other, the Nodding Horseman nodded like a madman, and his thoughts appeared to be bigger than anything anyone could ever imagine. The MusicMan wondered if the Nodding Horseman's head would come off with all this nodding going on and, although laughing, he said to him, "Steady, Nodding Horseman, you know love can be a demon when it appears as an illusion."

Last orders were called at the Jungle Bar, and the MusicMan stood in the queue for drinks. Presently, the man the Jungle Bar people call El Greco joined him. Academic El Greco, because of the way people were behaving around him, said to his friend the MusicMan, "The Jungle Bar people seem at times not to notice each other, as they push and shove one another in search of a last

drink at the Jungle Bar. The working class hating the money class, and the money class hating the common folk; and yet they will be all dancing together down at the Money-lovers Ball later on tonight - what a scene, MusicMan."

In the madness, the dancing barman shouted at someone, "Just you wait your turn!" then he turned and served someone else. He said to the man as he held a pint tumbler in his hand, "I think they leave their manners outside when they come in here."

The MusicMan, full of worldly wisdom, laughed at the scene, and said to El Greco, "Yes, I'm sure they pick their manners up from somewhere before they go home again," and the two music friends laughed.

Also standing at the Jungle Bar, waiting to get a last drink, was the Gorilla man. The MusicMan could see that although annoyed, his sleepy dark eyes understood the ways of the Jungle Bar people, and that this was his genius.

To pass the time before being served the Gorilla man teased the MusicMan about his musical book, "There is no one as fickle as the Jungle Bar people when it comes to getting what they want out of life, especially when it comes to music."

The MusicMan smiled at the Gorilla, and he replied, "I am sure I will get a fair hearing if, and when, my musical book comes out."

Not long after this the Gorilla man was served and, as the dancing barman put his drinks on top of the Jungle Bar, he said to him in a casual tone, "They say this year's Money-lovers Ball is a sell-out."

The Gorilla took great pleasure in confirming this, "It certainly is," he said, with a cool nod.

Even though the bar was busy and many customers were waiting to be served, the dancing barman and the Gorilla man started a conversation. The dancing barman, however, spotted some young Jungle Bar girls dancing on top of the tables, and he shouted at them to get down.

When the Gorilla man turned away from the Jungle Bar with his drinks he bumped into a well-known playboy capitalist, and he

carried on the conversation that he had just had with the dancing barman. Finding the right sentiment for the right moment, the Gorilla man looked back at the people trying to get served at the bar, and he laughed, as he said to the playboy capitalist, "I hope they don't spend all their money before they go to the Ball."

The playboy capitalist replied with all the sincerity of a Hollywood actor, "There's no chance of that, Mr Gorilla, the people that come in here have got plenty of money, I should know that - I pay them their wages."

As he drank his beer at the bar, the MusicMan couldn't help wondering about the time he lived in, "You would think that the state would be interested in helping the people. I cannot understand why we have to be at the mercy of all these Money-lovers. Sometimes, I think the world is just a playground for playboys like: the Gorilla, the Nodding Horseman, and King Clown: Money they want, money they crave, and all that…"

The MusicMan stared into space until the truth came to him,

*"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." (James 5 v 1)*

Not faraway looking wasted and worn-out Old Lickspittle had the floor, and the Money-lovers were listening to him, "I've just bought another four flats, and this time I am going to rent them out for twice the price of the going rate.

King Clown laughed and flapped his foot on the floor once more, "Rachman has got nothing on you - Old Lickspittle!" he shouted.

And as the Clown looked at the Nodding Horseman he nodded, and all the Money-lovers cheered. The Rattler came over to see what all the fuss was about. He had been trying to get something going with one of the Jungle Bar staff. When he got the chance the Rattler asked King Clown what changes he had in mind for the TV station, he had just bought.

King Clown looked at him as if the question was loaded. Then he answered him carefully, "I think we will have more foreign films for starters."

The Rattler liked the sound of that, and he told King Clown about some Dutch films he had seen, "Rattling good fun, they are."

King Clown thought the Rattler would like the idea, and he flapped his foot to show he was happy. The Gorilla never said much when the Rattler man was about. In fact, the only thing that they seemed to agree upon was money-love, and both men knew that it kept them from tearing each other apart.

Slowly the Gorilla turned away from the Rattler man, and he asked the MusicMan a few swift questions, "Have you thought about what sort of image you want to give the musical book, and what kind of songs are to be in it?"

A searching look after the questions had been asked left suspense hanging in the air at the Jungle Bar. The MusicMan supposed this to be a Money-lovers trick, and he replied just by saying: "A picture of a guitar on the front cover will give the right message as to what it's all about, I feel."

Poor Pollyanna, a young lady who, the Jungle Bar people say, has no job, no mother or father, and who sleeps under the arches in the city centre, wandered late that night into the Jungle Bar. Hearing that a lot of the Jungle Bar people were heading down town to the Money-lovers Ball, she said to someone that she wanted to go. After the Rattler had pointed out King Clown to her, she approached him tentatively. Poor Pollyanna said with a smile, "Can I have a ticket for the Ball, please?"

King Clown looked at first sad, then he went into his black Crombie coat pocket, and brought out a bunch of tickets and held them in front of her, "Certainly, Poor Pollyanna, of course you can go to the Ball."

King Clown took a ticket from the batch, and as he brought it up to her red and smiling face, he slowly pointed to the amount on the printed card, "If you give me the money for it."

Doctor High knew poor Pollyanna, and he smiled at her telling her that all his complimentary free tickets that he got through his beauty business had all gone.

Jujube and Flower girl knew, like everyone else in the Jungle Bar, that half the people going to the Ball had managed to get themselves a ticket either through a business contact, or had picked one up at the Jungle Bar. By this time, however, the only person with any left was King Clown. Jujube snarled at him, "Come on give her a ticket for the Ball - yah miserable sod!"

Flower girl put a flower in her hair, and whispered to her that it didn't really matter, "Don't worry, Pollyanna, it's no big deal."

The heat was taken off King Clown: for a fight started over at the far end of the Jungle Bar, and as the bouncers ran passed the MusicMan and his friends, the Nodding Horseman nodded in the direction where he thought the action was taking place.

When things settled down, and the men were ejected out of the Jungle Bar, King Clown ignored poor Pollyanna, but Jujube shouted at him again, "Come on yah Money-loving hyena, give poor Pollyanna a ticket for the Ball."

El Greco, the man who worked at the university, thought it really quite a scene, and in good taste he joked with the Clown, "If you give her a ticket, King Clown, she may give you a dance later."

The philosophy of live and let live did not impress King Clown, and he turned on the professor and snapped back at him, "You and your Music-loving mates have got free tickets. You should just be thankful about that." Then he raised his voice again, "It's not my fault there are millions on the dole, and people are starving all over the world."

So once more poor Pollyanna walked towards the door of the Jungle Bar wondering what type of world it was she lived in: a world it seemed where the majority did not seem to mind the minority making all the money, and keeping it for themselves.

The bouncer held the door open for her, and poor Pollyanna wondered back out into a dark lonely night. The Jungle Bar people, who had a keen sense as to who controlled what in and around the Jungle Bar, all took note. Certainly, the mad capitalist

vim, that some people maintained was totally against the Scottish spirit, did not seem to be on the wane.

Just before he left the Jungle Bar, Jack 'Judy' Garland said to the MusicMan, “Heaven knows, did the government not know what they were doing when it opened up the capitalist flood gates, north of the border. Did they not know it would create millionaires who have no understanding of how to care for society? Half the people in here have too much money, and the other half have not enough.”

As everyone left the Jungle Bar, the people who had tickets for the Ball headed down town, and those who had not headed home. With so many problems in society, and so many people out of work there was always tension inside the Jungle Bar. And the MusicMan, just before leaving the bar, felt that one day things would change, “Maybe what Jack 'Judy' Garland says will come true, and that one day there will be an upheaval in society, and those who have will have not, and those who have not will be free.”

# 6

This year the Money-lovers had decided to hire the Metro Club for the Ball. Up until last year the Metro Club, which lay just off Clyde Street, had been a warehouse. However, an American chap had bought it and changed it into a glamorous nightspot - apparently so that he could boast a nightclub in every city throughout the land.

The Music-lovers all walked down from the Jungle Bar to the Metro Club and, when they arrived outside the club, they were just in time to see some of the big shot Money-lovers arrive. King Clown pulled up in his Jaguar, followed by the Nodding Horseman, and finally the Gorilla, in what he called his Sherman tank: a jeep painted in camouflage colours.

The stewards ran towards the Money-lovers to see if they could help in anyway. Presently, in the car park a tall steward inquired, as he pointed a torch into King Clown's face, "Everything all right, sir."

King Clown switched off the car lights, and then the engine, and as he watched the strange shadows of the Jungle Bar people move along the Metro Club wall, he said to the steward in a fake upper class voice, "Fine my good man - just fine."

Inside the Metro Club the manager greeted King Clown, "Good evening, King Clown, nice to see you, again," and as he gave a little bow, the manager mentioned the fact that he had heard all about him buying up the local TV station, "yes, it looks a good purchase indeed, sir."

King Clown smiled and, as his eyes slowly wandered around the reception area of the Metro Club, he replied with a joke, "Yes, they say people can't live without it these days."

The manager of the Metro Club danced for the Clown, and as he laughed he replied, "Oh, that's very good, sir - very good, indeed."

The manager, when he settled down, invited King Clown to take off his black Crombie coat, and dispatch it to the appropriate place. The Crombie was duly taken off and, as the Clown walked towards the cloakroom area, he said to an attractive lady, who had just taken off her fur coat and was waiting to hand it in, "Do you like my little suit?"

The attractive woman in a long ball gown laughed at the Clown, then handed the young lady attendant her fur coat. When she took her ticket she heard the strange man beside her - who went by the name of King Clown - say, "It's actually a nineteen fifties suit, you know." And as he twirled and danced in front of her, he shouted, "And what about the waistcoat!"

At the same time as the colourful waistcoat was being shown off, the Nodding Horseman came over, and with a nod he informed her, "King Clown gets all his clothes made for him by designers all over the world, you know."

The Music-lovers that feature prominently in this story: the MusicMan, the Restaurateur, El Greco, Doctor High, the Incredible Carpet Salesman, and Ribbentrop the poet, all had been to the Metro Club before, and they liked the music they played there. However, they also knew that this annual celebration of Money-love to be a strange thing. Like all good Music-lovers they tried to forget about the people who love money, and they looked forward to dancing and rejoicing in the good things of life.

At the Metro Club Bar, the Music-lovers bought drinks and started chatting to each other. A few moments later someone in the crowd at the bar shouted, "Here comes the Clown!"

Everyone turned round and stared at the strange, five foot eight, swarthy figure coming through the crowd. Soon the jester started dancing for them in the middle of the empty disco varnished floor and, as the strobes all flashed around him, the Gorilla, and the Nodding Horseman, joined him. And it wasn't long before they all started chanting the Money-lovers song: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

As the MusicMan took in this scene, he also took in the faces of the people inside the nightclub, and he thought to himself, "I feel for every Money-lover at the Ball, there are at least two good Music-lovers, praise be to God."

After the song had finished the DJ thanked them, then the Gorilla, the Nodding Horseman, and King Clown, all headed for the same bar, where the MusicMan and his friends were standing; once there they started to play their money mad games again. The first proposal came from King Clown: "Right, my friends, whoever has the least amount of money on them, buys the first round - right."

The Nodding Horseman must have been confident, for as he nodded he added: "And the second one, too."

After the three Money-lovers had emptied their pockets, King Clown counted his lot first, "There you are; I have brought with me to the Ball five thousand pounds in one pound notes."

The Gorilla, before counting his money, laughed at the eccentricity of his friend the Clown. Then he counted out £2000, on top of the Metro bar. There was no nod from the Nodding Horseman: for he had only brought to the Ball, £1000 in cash. King Clown cried out loud and flapped his foot twice. Then he told his Money-loving friend, in a firm but funny voice, "Right, Nodding Horseman, get them in."

The Incredible Carpet Salesman and Ribbentrop, the well-known Glasgow poet, thought about dancing, but the Incredible

Carpet Salesman noticed the Money-lovers beside him laughing. Feeling in a good mood himself, the Carpet Salesman ordered a bottle of champagne from the Metro bar and, as he poured himself a glass, he turned to the Restaurateur, who was standing not that far away, and he said, "Looks like they are having a good time, eh."

Being Jewish the Incredible Carpet Salesman had a greater understanding of money and it's movements, than any of the other Music-lovers. Just then, the very same man, who had been growing his hair long, started to shake his head and rock'n'roll at the Money-lovers Ball.

Ribbentrop picked up his glass of bubbly and started to wander around the place like a stork on wheels. When he came across the MusicMan, he tapped him for a cigarette, and after lighting it, Ribbentrop said in a coquettish tone, "I say, MusicMan, these cigarettes are damn cool." Then he asked him, "Would you like to hear my new poem titled: Satin Blu Rumours?"

The MusicMan laughed, for he thought he had said, Satin Blu Bloomers, and I think this put the famous Glasgow poet off. However, as he brought his glass up to his mouth, Ribbentrop changed the subject and responded like a woman who flirts, "Did you see me at the party the other night, MusicMan?"

The MusicMan did not answer right away, and Ribbentrop, who had got very drunk that night, started to worry. Ribbentrop wondered aloud if he had taken off all his clothes, and had danced on top of a table - like his mate the Incredible Carpet Salesman said he had - and the man of music couldn't help laughing. To keep the poet thinking about what he had, or had not, done, the MusicMan added, "Yea, you were outrageous, right enough, Ribbentrop."

To take the attention off himself Ribbentrop turned to El Greco, and offered him a limp hand as a way of an introduction, "Hi, I'm Ribbentrop the famous Glasgow poet. Have you heard of me?"

A nervous laugh followed, and even though El Greco had met Ribbentrop many times before, he shook the limp hand, and

replied graciously, “It’s truly a great pleasure to meet such a great poet.”

This pleased the Glasgow poet, and he danced like a native Red Indian in front of El Greco, to the disco music that was playing behind them. That is until Ribbentrop bumped into a big shot Money-lover, and he stopped dancing. He shyly said, “Oh, I’m so sorry. Have we met before? My name is…”

His drinking partner the Incredible Carpet Salesman - to protect Ribbentrop - grabbed him by the collar of his purple shirt. He pulled him towards the Metro bar, offering an apology at the same time to the big shot Money-lover, “I’m sorry, I must apologise, my friend is on medication.”

Suddenly, someone somewhere shouted, “Good evening and welcome to this year’s Money-lovers Ball!” and a few old drunken red-faced boozers, behind the MusicMan, cheered. Then a special song went on, and the floor of the Metro Club slowly filled up with dancers.

Just after this two well-known Money-lovers, who used the happy- go-lucky Restaurateur’s place as an office during the day, came into the Metro Club, and walked up to the bar where the MusicMan and his friends were standing.

The Restaurateur recognised them right away, and he shouted over to one of them, against the loud dance music, “Eugene - the Diamond Dealer!”

Eugene looked at the other Diamond Dealer and, before saying anything to the Restaurateur, he eyed a few wealthy women who were dancing on the floor. Then he whispered to his partner, as if nothing in the business world went by him, “It looks like a good night, tonight. I think we will make a few useful contacts, here.”

The other man looked like the brains behind the business, and with an untroubled manner he gave respectability to the Diamond duo. The MusicMan thought the Diamond Dealers strange, and was surprised that his friend, the Restaurateur, found them respectable. The MusicMan thought to himself, “Their

friendliness is transparent. They look like first rate Money-lovers to me, and here you are greeting them as if they are for you."

Apparently, the Diamond Dealers had set up an office in the snug part of his restaurant, and were running a diamond service from there. They had promised the Restaurateur that they would buy him a big hotel for his troubles. During a conversation at the Money-lovers Ball, Eugene turned the world upside down and into a joke for the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur. He said in a cool shifty manner, "Just think, you will soon have a restaurant in every city of the world," and laughed.

Feeling that the joke had missed the mark, Eugene quickly reassured the Restaurateur, "No, no, no, everything is fine, really. We will be squaring you up soon."

The Restaurateur seeing that they had no drinks in their hands, asked them what they wanted to drink. Not long after this they soon found themselves talking about old jazz funk artists who were popular in the nineteen seventies. By this time the Incredible Carpet Salesman and Ribbentrop the poet were on the dance floor rock'n'rolling with some of the cats from the Jungle Bar. The MusicMan would have liked to join them, but El Greco needed a refill, and he went back to the Metro bar for some more drinks.

Behind the Metro bar a girl ran from one end of the bar to the other serving customers. Someone said that her two colleagues had called off sick, and the poor thing had to work all night on her own with no relief. The Money-lovers liked this, and many of them shouted after her as if it were all a great joke, "Right, I'm next, over here! Come on dear, hurry up!"

When the poor barmaid served the MusicMan, she looked at him as he asked for two bottles of beer; but he didn't think she saw him standing there at the Metro bar: for she looked so tired and fed up.

Old Lickspittle shouted from the middle of the bar, in a booming voice, "Come on, hurry up, young lady, we can't wait all night," and as a few old Money-lovers around him cheered, he added, "for goodness sake, we will be all sober soon."

As the MusicMan headed back to El Greco with the beers, he over heard a Money-lover say something to another Money-lover, something about the common people who go to the Jungle Bar, "Yes, full of drugs, very primitive, don't you think…"

King Clown, the biggest Money-lover in town, loved nothing better than to play the fool, and when he spotted some of the Jungle Bar people having fun on the dance floor, he went over and joined them, and tried to imitate their wild actions.

After laughing sarcastically, King Clown shouted at some of the old Money-lovers, who had taken seats around the dance floor, "Come on you old fools, get up and boogie on down!"

Some of the old rich obeyed the Clown, and soon the Metro dance floor was full with all sorts from every walk of life. King Clown stayed on the dance floor for a while. Then he wandered around the tables and introduced himself to some of the people from the world of commerce and enterprise, who had been given special invitations to attend the Ball.

As he walked around the tables, the Clown acted like a candidate for a political party. Shaking hands with one man he had never met before, he said haughtily, "Yes, nice to see you. Are you having a good time?" Then he laughed and moved onto the next person and said the very same thing, "Yes, nice to see you. Are you having a good time?"

Sometimes he would sing the Money-lovers song to them: "Yes, that's it, Money we want, money we crave…"

The MusicMan reckoned: "Life for a Money-lover is always centred on money, and what money can do. Salvation for a Money-lover lies in a bank-book, or a business deal. Everything that is meaningful comes through a coin or note for them. If they were not so funny they would be obscene."

The MusicMan watched the Clown with great interest, and as he stared at him his mind mumbled something to him about the ways of a clown: "It's the way of a clown to be happy, yet sad; to crack a joke to hide a feeling, to turn the will to meaningless fun. What he wants, I guess, must be something far removed from

everyday pleasures. He must want to live in a world where sense makes balderdash gunge."

The MusicMan thanked the Good Lord that money had not eaten into his soul, and made him a clown for the love of money. Just then, the Rattler arrived with Old Lickspittle, and as they watched the dancers on the floor they started talking about this or that deal, and how they had rattled someone in the past for money.

Standing next to them were a group of pawn and porn brokers, cracking jokes bluer than an azure sea; and then just in front of them, before the metal rim around the dance floor, a few old Money-lovers were trying to explain, to an impressionable young man, the theory of money success that happens in every generation. A grey-haired old man turned to the young man beside him, and gave him some advice: "You see, young fellow, man was made for money, not money for man. Money is not everything, but everything is money. Once you understand this you will start to make your pile."

Another old Money-lover, in an angry tone, told him what he thought it was that made a good businessman in the modern world: "Listen, son, no one gets to the top being nice. You have got to let the other person know that it's your money. Then he will look up to you." After a cough, he quickly added, "Never let them join a trade union, and never give them a contract of work to sign. Pay them when it suits you, and not when it suits them: in short give them no rights."

On the way back to the bar, King Clown bumped into his sidekick the Nodding Horseman, and he started pulling his leg, "Nodding Horseman, you know that woman, who the Jungle Bar people call, Splash?"

The Nodding Horseman nodded, and quietly said, "Yes."

"Well, I have just found out that she is a demimonde."

Just to prove the point, King Clown dragged the Nodding Horseman across the dance floor to meet her. Splash, the demimonde of the Jungle Bar, had just finished telling the Rattler man about her intentions for the rest of the year. She suddenly looked up and saw two figures hurtling towards her.

King Clown, as he danced in front of her, made up some daft French, "Splash, *toute la journee, toute la nuit*," and for some odd reason he started doing the breaststroke, as if he were swimming across a pool.

King Clown grabbed Splash and he cried out, "Drown me in love, Splash, drown me in sorrow."

The MusicMan could not believe some of the things that went on around him; but it was the innocent joy of the common people, who went to the Jungle Bar, as they danced to the music in the Metro Club, that gave him the greatest pleasure, "Just to watch them move around, and mix with each other thrills me. There are like a great movement spreading stories, fashion, and fun, wherever they go, God bless them."

Suddenly, a popular song brought everyone onto the dance floor. The MusicMan and his friends formed a circle, and they all clapped and cheered.

The Incredible Carpet Salesman pushed Ribbentrop into the centre, and shouted, "Come on, Ribbentrop, rock'n'roll."

When the Queen without a Crown arrived at the Money-lovers Ball, one of her Blow boys asked her tentatively, "Would the Queen of the Jungle Bar like to dance?"

The Queen slowly moved her beautiful Nordic blue eyes over the many dancing faces on the Metro dance floor. Then as she put her cloakroom ticket into her shiny black leather bag, she replied, "No, I think we shall have a drink first," and she walked to the Metro bar, turning many heads as she went.

Word soon went round the Money-lovers Ball that the woman who breaks hearts, and who the Jungle Bar people call the Queen without a Crown, had arrived at the Ball.

The common people from the Jungle Bar were delighted, and Jack 'Judy' Garland - who was still threatening to put some of the Money-lovers up against the wall - lifted his pint of beer and saluted her, "What a woman."

Some of the Money-lovers liked her too, and some of the older ones smiled at her, as she walked by their tables. Unfortunately, the nouveau riche said uncomplimentary things

about her. No need to name the person who said this, "I would like to rattle her."

The Nodding Horseman nodded, and his face took on a mad look. King Clown, however, turned to the Nodding Horseman and said, "One night I'll kidnap her, and break her pretty red heart. Then she will not be so smart and go around breaking young men's hearts, and acting like a Queen without a Crown."

The Nodding Horseman liked this idea, and he egged his friend on, "Brilliant, King Clown, brilliant."

About ten minutes later at the Metro bar, the Incredible Carpet Salesman - half-drunk, half-daft - got the Queen mixed up with a woman he had once taken out.

As the Incredible Carpet Salesman lent on the bar he opened his eyes wide, as if to tell her all about the incredible world of a carpet salesman. In a tipsy tone, he asked her, "Would you like a little glass of champagne, my dear?"

The Queen without a Crown looked at the drunken Carpet Salesman, and did not know at first what to make of him. To play it safe the Queen turned away, and instructed a Blow boy beside her - just by looking at him - to strike up conversation.

Standing beside the Incredible Carpet Salesman, Ribbentrop stared at the beautiful Queen without a Crown. I don't think he had ever been so close to one so revered before. The Incredible Carpet Salesman, to his credit, noticed Ribbentrop completely lost in a fantasy world, and he grabbed him and cried out, "Come on, Ribbentrop, get that down you."

Ribbentrop slowly picked up his glass of champagne from the bar, and his mate the Incredible Carpet Salesman pulled him towards the Metro dance floor.

The happy-go-lucky Restaurateur bought black Sambuca, and after drinking it back in one go, he seemed to notice with great ease how the women went by him, and the sex that lay inside them. When a sexy young lady in a see-through dress smiled at him, he said to the MusicMan, with big eyes staring, "There should be a law against it, you know, MusicMan."

Two young ladies who went to the Jungle Bar at weekends came over to speak to the MusicMan, and his friend the Restaurateur. When the Restaurateur noticed who it was that was coming through the crowd, he shouted, "Look, MusicMan, it's Rhapsody and Rose!"

Rhapsody and Rose were very attractive indeed. Rhapsody with her Latin eyes, dark hair, and rosy cheeks; and Rose with her long dark hair, and tight fitting clothes. The two of them looked as if they had just dropped in from Monte Carlo, Nice, or Cannes. The MusicMan struck up conversation with Rhapsody, and Rose chatted to the Restaurateur. The MusicMan told Rhapsody all about his musical novel, and how the Money-lovers were starting to show an interest in him.

Rhapsody interrupted him, and said in a kind voice, "I hope I'm in it MusicMan." Then she reminded him with a smile about a flight of stairs, a flowering almond settee, a visit to an art gallery, and a bottle of red wine, "It sounds good."

King Clown, daft with drink by this time, had the idea still in his mind to capture the Queen without a Crown, and break her pretty red heart.

The Queen had unintentionally wandered over to where he was standing and, when King Clown spotted her, he crept up behind her and he whispered into her ear, "Helloooo, it's meeeee. The man of your dreams has come to take you awaaaaay."

The Queen looked at him full in the face. Then she looked right through him as if he were a figment of her imagination, or a phantom flying through her thoughts. However, King Clown cried out as if singing the same song as he had a moment ago, "What about a little dance, then," and as he waited for the Queen to answer, he put his elbow out for her to hold onto.

The Queen, who had broken many hearts in the Jungle Bar, had come across all sorts of weird and wonderful characters in her time. In a haughty tone, the Queen dismissed the Clown with two words, "Get lost."

But some of her Blow boys and Blow girls thought King Clown funny, and they started to laugh. So to alter the balance of

advantage back to herself, the Queen without a Crown picked up a pint of brown beer, from a table near by, and poured it over the Clown's head. This time she dismissed him with three words, "Now, get lost."

The man who had just had a pint of beer poured over him did not have the title of King Clown for nothing and, as the beer dripped down from his jet black hair, he put his lips together and looked up at the Queen. In a child like voice, he suggested, "Kiss and make up."

The Queen without a Crown, whose heart the Jungle Bar people say can never be broken, had no sympathy for the chief Money-lover. She walked away from him triumphant, and to symbolise victory, the Queen dusted her hands three times.

Everyone laughed and, as she walked away from the Clown, the MusicMan noticed some of the Money-lovers, who sat at the tables close by, look up and laugh. Then they immediately went back to planning the next financial year. He also noticed on their faces the instinct of gain, as if it lay at the top of their thoughts. This action, in a sort of funny way, made the MusicMan wonder where the instinct for the well-being of society lay in the great scheme of things, "They must possess it. It must be just forgotten about for the moment. Hopefully, it will come back to them when they sit at their desks in their big offices."

Now and again, the MusicMan noticed some of the Money-lovers stare at the dance floor, and watch the good dancers from the Jungle Bar scene dance. At a table not very faraway from him, the MusicMan overheard a well-known financier say to Old Lickspittle, "Wonderful beggars, don't you think?"

Old Lickspittle, after puffing on his cigar, replied, "Simply native." Then in the same Etonian voice as before, he changed the subject, "I say did you see that woman, the Jungle Bar people call the Queen without a Crown, pour a pint of beer over our friend King Clown?" The other man laughed and nodded saying that he had, then Old Lickspittle added, "Well, I tell you, I wouldn't have let her away with it even if the poor woman's heart cannot be broken."

The two old Money-lovers laughed. Then they looked at the Jungle Bar people, as if life went to them first, then came back to them, refined with all its gifts of money, class, and style.

King Clown searched the Money-lovers Ball to see if the Queen without a Crown had left. He spotted her dancing with the Jungle Bar people and, when he walked by the MusicMan, he said to him, as if to indicate - through a joke - the death of a Queen, "I'll capture her one night, MusicMan, and break her pretty red heart."

The MusicMan felt that under the high jinks of laughter lay a will that attached itself to schemes, for the sake of possession, and ultimately self-destruction. The MusicMan warned himself once more that if he was going to get involved with them, because of his musical novel, to keep his distance, "Let them wallow in the mire of money-love, MusicMan."

King Clown, just then, for some reason looked at the MusicMan closely. Then as if not thinking about what he was going to say, he asked the MusicMan about the woman who had just poured a pint of beer over his head, "Do you know the woman they call the Queen without a Crown?"

The MusicMan smiled as if that would be enough, and hoped he would wander away. But King Clown searched his face, and as the MusicMan spoke the Clown looked for an answer, "Yes, I got to know her a few years ago, she…"

Before he could finish his sentence, King Clown had guessed right, "She has broken your heart too."

When King Clown had calmed down he looked at the MusicMan, and the artist inside the Clown smiled at him, "I suppose you have written a little song for her, or is she a character in your musical novel."

For lovers and fools, the MusicMan always gave a beautiful smile, and he hoped and prayed for the truth to be revealed to them. As if not caring King Clown moved from side to side, and as his eyes narrowed, he asked the MusicMan suggestively, "What's she like, then?"

The MusicMan thought for a moment. Then he answered him, "She's a lovely woman. She feels, however, that no man can own her, so that is why she can never give her heart to someone."

King Clown flapped his foot, many times. Then he shouted out loud, "I'll break her pretty red heart - don't you worry about that, MusicMan."

An old Money-lover passing by, with drinks on a tray for his friends, laughed, and said, "She will take you for every penny, King Clown - that's what she'll do."

King Clown shouted after him, "There's no chance of that, my friend, my money and my heart are tied together in love. They cannot be separated."

The MusicMan laughed and, although he thought this very funny, it made him wonder, "For every one of us we have a weak spot, even this Money-loving Clown must have one: a pretty face, an attitude that follows a certain fashion…"

Thinking about it more profoundly, the MusicMan said to himself, "I wonder if he would give up his wealth for someone? Or is he like the man who stopped our Lord and asked him how to be a good man: and when he was told to give up money-love for the sake of salvation, he ended up wandering away following material wealth."

The MusicMan's thoughts made him think about the Money-loving Clown, and he worried for him: "Would love be too much for him?"

Just then, Lulu, a dark skinned man who made clothes for the people of the Jungle Bar, joined the MusicMan and his friends, and started handing out cigarettes. Lulu knew Rhapsody and Rose, and after complimenting them on their outfits. He looked over towards the dance floor at some of the Jungle Bar people, who were wearing his latest designs, and he gave a little laugh to himself. As he lit the MusicMan's cigarette - trying not to laugh - Lulu said softly to him, "I see there's a good turn out for this year's Ball." And as his African eyes stared at the MusicMan, he added, "There will soon be more of them than us."

Rose suddenly remembered that Lulu made clothes, and she joked with him, "I think King Clown will be buying a new suit from you next week."

The Restaurateur thought he had better tell Lulu what she was on about, "The Queen without a Crown has just poured a pint of beer over King Clown's head."

When Lulu heard what had happened his face became serious, and he said, "I hope it's just a new suit he needs," then he too laughed.

For the next dance, the Restaurateur danced with Rose, and Rhapsody with the MusicMan. After searching her face for clues, as to the last time they had met and kissed, the MusicMan smiled. Then suddenly Rhapsody wet her lips, and before he knew it she was kissing him, and telling him all about the last time they had made love. The MusicMan tried to catch his thoughts as the dream of life came upon him; but his memory didn't want to know, and he soon gave into bright painted lips and a brand new wonderful world called love.

A little later, sitting at a table near to the dance floor, Rhapsody revealed to the MusicMan the sad news that had come to her just recently, "My father died, last week."

The MusicMan wanted to say something, but no words seemed to surface, and into his head came the thoughts of, faith, prayer, and a hope that one day they would meet again.

Rhapsody brought her head up from his shoulder, and said softly, "It's funny I was having such a good time when the telephone rang." As she wiped away a tear, brushing it gently over her cheek, she added, "Nothing will ever be the same, MusicMan."

Rhapsody looked over at Rose and the Restaurateur, who were dancing, and she smiled at them as if they were in another world. Then she made clear her thoughts, "My carefree pleasure days are over. I feel that a chapter in my life has now closed."

The MusicMan put his arm round her again, and tried to say something helpful, "Now, now, everything will be just fine, just you wait and see."

As the MusicMan kissed her another tear fell, and this time it ran down her cheek and onto his face; even under the colourful lights of the Metro Club, the MusicMan could see life had been drained out of her with worry and regret.

There was nothing the Restaurateur loved better than to have a girl in one hand, and a bottle of beer in the other, and he rejoiced by dancing to three or four songs with Rose. The happy-go-lucky Restaurateur came forward, then he danced away again as if trying to deflect Cupid's arrow, and make it fall into the girl's heart so that she would fall in love with him. Before he planted a generous kiss on her mouth, he waited to see if she was willing.

Rose laughed at him and said, "I think you're a Romeo at night, and a Restaurateur during the day. That's what you are."

The MusicMan and Rhapsody watched the Jungle Bar dancers on the floor in front of them, and thankfully they seemed to give her energy to be free again.

Rhapsody said something about the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur and Rose, who were dancing. With a sympathetic look in his eyes the MusicMan smiled at Rhapsody, as if telling her that Cupid's arrow may well yet come and hit her before the end of the Ball.

Enthusiastically the Money-lovers Ball raged on, and at times it seemed as if arrows were being fired willy-nilly here and there all over the place, and it was only a case of standing in the right place at the right time to catch one and fall in love.

Just before the end of the Ball, the MusicMan, Rhapsody and Rose, and the Restaurateur, decided to head for the airport for a late night coffee, and watch the planes come into land. Rose picked up a small compact bag from under one of the tables, and everyone followed her when she said, "Right, let's do it."

When they got to the front door of the Metro Club, King Clown suddenly appeared and, with madness in his dark comic eyes, he shouted after the MusicMan and his friends as they walked outside, "Where are you going?"

The MusicMan had met a few eccentrics in his time, and he knew the best way to deal with them was to be friendly and open, "We're heading for a late night coffee at the airport."

Before he ran back into the club, King Clown shouted, "See you there, then!"

# 7

Unknown to the MusicMan and his friends, just as they were getting into a taxi round the corner from the Metro Club, King Clown and the Nodding Horseman were getting into a fast Jaguar sports car in the car park. King Clown shouted as he threw the keys at the Nodding Horseman,"You drive!"

The car quickly revved up and the Nodding Horseman's head soon went back and forward. The engine made a terrific sound, and as they sped off the Nodding Horseman cried out, as if in love, "I love driving this car, it goes like a bullet."

Presently, instructions came from the passenger seat, King Clown said, "Follow that taxi, Nodding Horseman."

The taxi driver looked along the road and searched for the best turn off to the airport, and just as he slowed down a car flew by him with a drunken Clown waving out of the window, shouting, "Race you to the airport Music-loverssssss!"

The Restaurateur laughed and, with his back to the taxi driver, he turned round and tried to make an excuse for them, "They have just been to the Money-lovers Ball." And as he turned back to look at his friend the MusicMan, who was sitting in the opposite seat, he added plaintively, "There all right - just drunk."

Everyone at that moment looked out of the taxi window, and followed the strange dark Jaguar that had inside it, a Clown and a man who nods all the time, as the car headed northwards.

Once more, just after the turn off for the motorway, the MusicMan and his night-time passengers seemed to all stare out of the window at the same time, and focus on four forgotten figures in the forefront of a wasted modern world. A broken oil can kept the figures warm, and threw flashes of their faces into the black taxi as it went passed them. The MusicMan spoke as if to himself, or some faraway friend, "You don't have to go far in Glasgow to see the forgotten people - do you?"

The MusicMan remembered he had once spotted the Gorilla man driving through this way in what he called his converted Sherman tank, and he recalled how the Gorilla laughed at the poor people who could not find work.

Rhapsody's voice brought the MusicMan back into the taxi with a kind thought, as regards the real world of rich and poor, "You would think someone would find them work and help them."

Rose agreed with her, but she saw the solution to be a different one: "The poor people should sleep outside the fat cat homes: for it is the fat cats - not the politicians - who are to blame."

The taxi driver laughed, and for the first time added to the discussion, "I, the politicians are useless - right enough."

Not long after the laughing had died away the taxi driver looked in his rear view mirror, and he noticed a jeep painted in camouflage colours, lit up by street lights and an early morning moon, coming towards him.

Rose had seen the driver of the jeep in the city centre, many times, during the day. When Rose looked out of the taxi window, she said in a condescending voice, "Oh, look, it's that galoot they call the Gorilla."

Everyone looked out of the right-hand side of the cab as the vehicle came along side. The man inside the painted jeep rolled down his window, and hollered, "Did you see those layabouts back there around the fire!" and as both vehicles slowed down to the

same speed, the Gorilla roared with laughter. Then he shouted again, "I would have them working down the mines, or on the roads!"

The Gorilla's voice seemed to carry on ahead of him, and when it caught the wind it seemed to echo something, and then come back in at the rolled down window of the taxi once again. The voice reminded the MusicMan of how the Gorilla shouted at street traders during the day, as he went around the city in his camouflaged jeep.

Rhapsody cuddled up to the MusicMan, and felt the woollen fabric of his suit jacket of her face. She watched for a time the late night road flash by her. The orange and white lights seemed to flash then run like magic all the way up to the airport and back down again, and for a time they made her dizzy. With a kiss she whispered to the MusicMan, "I thought we were going to be alone, tonight."

The jeep followed them for a while. Then it overtook the cab. The Gorilla looked at the five faces inside the taxi, and he shouted something to the MusicMan about getting to the airport quicker than a fighter jet plane.

The MusicMan cracked a joke: "If that voice carries into any of the homes close by, I believe the people living there will think it has come from a madman, probably heading somewhere after a late night party, or ball."

Feeling the loneliness of the late night motorway, Rose turned round, and asked the driver in a soft voice, "How far is it now?"

The driver told her that they would be there in about ten minutes. As if to help matters he put his foot down, and all the fantastic orange and yellow lights, all along the motorway, got quicker and quicker, as the distance got less and less.

Rose, who had her back to the driver, turned round to look at the speedometer. Then she suggested to the others, "Listen, when we get to the airport let's all jump on a plane for Italy or France, and get jobs there working in bars and hotels."

The MusicMan smiled as if to say, "Wouldn't that be nice." Then he suddenly focused on two cars that were far out in the

distance, and he immediately cried out, “Look at the speed they’re going at!”

The Restaurateur slowly turned round, and when he caught sight of the two fast cars, he said to the taxi driver, in a friendly manner, “They are probably Money-lovers who have had far too much to drink.”

Everyone in the Hackney cab laughed: for the Restaurateur had probably more to drink than anyone that night. The driver meanwhile looked at his speedometer. Then he tried to guess the speed they were doing: “They must be doing at least one hundred and ten,” he said in an official voice, before changing gear and warning his passengers in the back of his cab, “You know, two young people were killed last week, and three the week before, on this stretch of the motorway.”

Rhapsody saw the symbol of fast cars in the night as a metaphor. She turned to the man whom she had just kissed, and she cracked a joke, “Maybe they are the type of people, MusicMan, who will one day get a hold of your musical book and runaway with it - leaving you penniless and poor.”

The MusicMan laughed, but the penny did drop, probably because he had at this point in time nowhere else to go with it. At the airport King Clown, the Nodding Horseman, and the Gorilla were all waiting for the MusicMan, and his friends to arrive.

On arrival King Clown opened the taxi door for them, and as he did so in came some late night early morning voices from the airport behind him. The whole atmosphere of organising a late night, early morning, international business, within seconds filled the stationary black taxicab.

King Clown laughed and, with a little bow, he said, “Happy Couples at the Airport, now that sounds like a good title for a film - don’t you think?”

When Rose got out of the taxi cab, she noticed King Clown flap his foot four times on the tarmac, and she asked him scornfully, “Why do you flap your foot so much?”

King Clown made a face and, as he took her arm, he replied in a daft voice, “One flap for every lover, my dear.”

On the second landing of the airport there seemed to be places where people could eat and drink - but only one cafeteria was open late.

As they made their way up the moving staircase, King Clown glanced over the figures of Rhapsody and Rose, and when caught by Rose, he joked in a daft voice, "Well, ladies were you impressed by all the professional people who turned up at the Money-lovers Ball, this year?"

Just in case he had caused offence, and to keep mother earth from coming up and belting him, King Clown flapped his foot once more. Rose whispered to Rhapsody at the top of the stairs, "He's such a funny man - don't you think?"

Inside the cafeteria King Clown sat facing the window that looked out onto the many runways. As everyone looked about them, taking in the night-time scene of an international airport, King Clown started talking a lot of rubbish, and presently seemed to lose the thread of his own conversation. He started to mutter to himself, "Eh, that woman, the Queen without a Crown, she bugs me - but I'll sort her out," and in the same breath he asked himself, "I wonder why she went home early?"

Rose picked up a small menu and glanced at it. Then she answered him in a sharp tone, "Because you annoyed her - that's why."

King Clown looked at her, and his eyes searched her beautiful face as it suddenly changed from being happy to being sad, "It was just a bit of fun my dear, I thought she was playing hard to get - that's all."

As they all remembered the incident, the Nodding Horseman nodded, and the Gorilla man roared with laughter. Just then, everyone seemed to look out of the window. They all stared at a big jumbo jet plane coming down from a dark night sky above a never-ending black runway.

King Clown put his arms out wide as if to land himself on top of the cafe table; and as everyone laughed the genius of a Clown noticed that they had all lost their concentration. King Clown changed the subject back to business. He said in a firm, but

friendly voice, "Well, Mr MusicMan, we like the idea of the musical book. The Money-lovers would like you to come with us to London to see a man named Oz. If he likes it, he may well give us enough money, and we will be able to publish it for you."

The Nodding Horseman nodded that this was true. Then the Gorilla man, after roaring with laughter, told the MusicMan in an upbeat tone something about Oz. The Gorilla said proudly, "He's the top man in London for the arts, and we are well in with him."

Sometimes when someone was talking, the MusicMan watched King Clown switch off. He noticed, however, that when someone said something relevant regarding money, King Clown's dark eyes would wander, and he would say, "What," slowly as if to give his money brain time to catch up. Then he would repeat the word again, "What," and before the speaker had finished repeating what he had just said, King Clown had worked everything out in his Money-loving brain.

When King Clown thought the money topic exhausted, as regards the MusicMan's book, he walked over to where the sign said, 'Coffee and Sandwiches,' and he bought everyone tea and biscuits. As he handed the biscuits round, King Clown started to act daft. He said to Rose, as he heehawed, "They say I have shares in this company, you know, but I have shares in so many companies, and I forget who they all are."

All who owns this and that annoyed the MusicMan, and he turned and looked at his friend the Restaurateur, and he asked him, "What happened to El Greco? I know he went down to the Money-lovers Ball, but I hardly saw him after that."

The Restaurateur smiled. Then after a puff on his cigarette, he put his other hand on the side of his face, and he said with great ease, "He went home early with a redhead from the Jungle Bar."

Rhapsody looked at Rose and, before laughing, she suggested, "He's probably down there on the tarmac with her just now waiting to whisk her off to some Greek island."

This made the Restaurateur take his hand off his face, and touch the hair at the side of his temple. He then said to her in a calm, but excited way, "He's some man, all right, is our El Greco."

The Restaurateur turned to Rose and before planting a kiss on her lips, he looked down onto the tarmac, as if his Greek friend was there waiting for him, and he said, "Let's go and join them, then."

Dying to become involved in the conversation Rhapsody changed the subject back to the topic of the musical book her friend had written. Looking at King Clown, she said, "Tell me who will publish the book, and when I will be able to get a copy of it?"

King Clown, in a slow and deliberate tone, answered her right away, "We will publish it, but you must understand, my dear, we never use our own money. We always use someone else's. This is standard Money-lovers policy."

Rhapsody stared at the Clown, and she tried to understand him. She then turned and transferred a worried look to her friend Rose that let it be known, to everyone around the table at the airport, she was totally unimpressed.

That look made the MusicMan think again about his musical novel, "Will it ever be printed and for sale in the shops, or will the idea just echo in a ghostly sort of way in airports and Jungle Bars till I am old."

A ghostly voice somewhere in time and space said, "Oh yes, musical book lost in space. We need someone to write it…" Then another added, "I know a chap who has written a musical book, but no one wants to know him," and then the voices faded inside the MusicMan's head.

Sensing that the two Money-lovers around the table were ill at ease at this point, Rose invited them to talk about their favourite subject: Money-love. She put her coffee cup down on top of her saucer and, after listening to the familiar sound it made, she said to King Clown, "What's the big deal about money, anyway? You should think about giving people employment. You should focus

on the aesthetic principle of art in business, rather than just money."

Hearing her say this the Gorilla man seemed to waken up from a sleepy sort of dream. His whole being became alive, and he said to Rose in a booming voice, "What do you mean! Money gets you everything: big houses, fast cars…"

The Gorilla I am sure would have liked to add to this list, but the Nodding Horseman interrupted him, and with a nod he said in a daft voice, "And fast women, ha, ha, ha."

King Clown laughed at the Nodding Horseman, then he wondered aloud, "Do fast women and Nodding Horsemen get on?"

Suddenly, the Clown's voice became serious, and he looked at Rose as if he was hurt, "Listen, when I drive my Jaguar through the streets the workers in their small cars all look at me; and when I sit next to them at the traffic lights, I see envy in their eyes."

Rose burst out laughing. Then with a thorn she cut him, "I can't imagine anyone wanting to be a Clown, even if it got them a big car, or a big house, or a fast woman."

The chief Money-lover did not like this, and he lost his temper. He shouted back, "Listen, I have enough money to buy this entire city. I have enough money to make people who are rich - poor, and who are poor - rich; and just by one telephone call I can get people work just like that."

To the sound of a finger click, Rose sat back in her chair and, as the spirit of truth moved around them, she responded in a relaxed manner, "So why don't you?"

King Clown's face changed and, after a few silent seconds had past, he said to her in a cute and shocking way, "Because I haven't got the time."

The Nodding Horseman nodded and the Gorilla roared with laughter, and then they all started singing their party song: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

To show where her sympathy lay, Rhapsody cuddled up to the MusicMan and, as she peeped out at a dangerous world, a look

in her eyes suggested that she wanted to runaway from a world that declares: a sale is not a sale until there are cleared funds in the till. As her head lay on the MusicMan's shoulder, she said sympathetically, "Well, I hope the MusicMan gets something for his hard work - that's all."

King Clown laughed and said, "Oh, he will."

But the MusicMan noticed at this point that the head of the Nodding Horseman did not move, and the small farcical eyes of the Gorilla looked right through him.

A feeling that everyone understood what had just been said suddenly became apparent - because everything and anything went in these money mad days just before the year two thousand - and the topic sort of disappeared.

After a few moments of silence, Rose said to herself as she looked at King Clown, "Now that a man, who the Jungle Bar people call King Clown, has got his hands on the local TV station, I wonder what images will now bombard our senses."

King Clown loved this, and he joked with her in a polite voice, saying, "You must understand, young lady, when you're given the responsibility to entertain people it is indeed a great honour. However, having said that I feel that when you give them happiness they become sad, and when you give them heartache they become happy. So that is why I am going to give them, lots of tragic films. Films that are full of murder, crime, and corruption. In short, if that's what they want - then that is what they will get."

King Clown laughed again, then added, "It seems to liberate the fools."

The Nodding Horseman nodded in agreement with the Clown, and the Gorilla roared and repeated what his boss had just said, "Yea, if that's what they want - then that is what they will get."

King Clown simplified things by saying, "All we do is follow the ratings, and pick up the money."

On the money topic, the Restaurateur thought people were spending more money than ever these days: "My restaurant has

been packed out every night of the week, for the last month," he stated, trying not to boast.

The Nodding Horseman confirmed this, for he had taken the Picture People there last week and, with a nod in the direction of the Restaurateur, he said, "Deadbeat the drummer liked the paintings on the wall."

Rhapsody picked up on the artistic theme, she said softly, "Ah, my dear father loved art; he told me more than once, when I was young, that I would be a famous painter one day," and her sad eyes filled with tears, as they fixed on a loving image of her father.

The MusicMan could see that the Money-lovers around the cafe table at the airport did not care one jot about her. This became even more apparent when the daft Nodding Horseman said to her, "Oh, you don't have to be a great painter to be a great artist these days. I tell my band the Picture People that making money is an art, and is more important than making music."

The conversation went from bad to worse after this. So when the MusicMan saw a new dawn announce itself to the world, in shades of a thousand blues, through the huge airport window, he thought it a good time to head home. So as the many around the world got up for work that morning, four Music-lovers, and three Money-lovers, who had all been to a ball headed home.

# 8

The following day, the MusicMan got up around eleven. He looked at himself in the little square bathroom mirror, and as he yawned he thought to himself, "Ah, a good night out with my music friends is always wonderful - even if it leaves you feeling tired the next day."

The MusicMan washed and shaved himself. Then he sat down at the piano, and soon his hands were moving over all the white and black notes on the keyboard. The creative spirit reminded him that time for the artist is time against him, unless he is fixing himself onto bright new colours, full of hope and never ending possibilities.

The MusicMan felt deep in his heart, "Music is the only medium to mix symbols and signs back together again. When you're feeling down and you hear a piece of music, the spirit world comes back to you, and you somehow understand everything again. Music is a sound, and a sound can come from anywhere and say anything."

As he picked up the first page of the Music-lovers book, he found himself preoccupied with some of the songs in it. The Money-lovers didn't know the songs had not been finished yet; even though they had the Music-lovers manuscript, they thought

everything had been completed. They imagined that when they got the money from the man in London, who went by the name of Oz, it would just be a case of publishing the Music-lovers songs.

The MusicMan yawned and just for a moment he thought about going back to bed for the rest of the day to dream about young ladies like: Flower girl, Rhapsody, Rose, and the Queen without a Crown. However, he stared at the pencil marks, on the duplicate manuscript copy in front of him, until he felt a force pull him on and on. It was as if someone somewhere needed music just to survive: "The world is a lonely place, MusicMan, send us a song and we will help change its ways," echoed a lonely voice somewhere in space and time.

With a sigh he wrote another word beside the melody line. Then he thought to himself, "Someone just like you, MusicMan, is sitting all alone somewhere, and it's your job to send him a song to cheer him up - so get on with it, and make wonderful music."

As the MusicMan started to write down more lyrics he secretly wondered to himself about the creative spirit, and how it whispers into ears, things like: "Look at this, look at that, isn't that wonderful." Then he laughed to himself when he thought about the demons who must murmur into Money-loving ears, things like: "Money we want, money we crave," and all that sort of trash.

So once more the MusicMan checked the half-finished songs written in front of him in dots and lines; and as he went over them again and again, he felt sometimes that they had a will all of their own. When he read the final chapter of the book, he flirted with changing the ending; but all that stuff in his head about the marketplace being against art would just not fit in. The MusicMan thought to himself, "I guess we will always live in a world full of money men and women, and that we the artists of the people will just have to try to understand them."

He then reminded himself of the reason why he had written the songs for the novel: "Life is a celebration - it is not about material gain, or reputation."

The MusicMan believed his songs helped people. When he had played them at late night parties, he could see the joy of life

for himself on people's faces. People seemed to connect with a deeper meaning than he could ever know, or understand.

Later on that afternoon, the MusicMan decided to go for a ride on his bike round the country estate: "Hopefully the fresh air will waken me up, and put me in a good mood for the rest of the week," he said to himself, as he zipped up his air force blue bomber jacket.

Within minutes he was on his bike, and the concrete images that sit on top of a beautiful green world were soon whizzing by him. After crossing the railway bridge, thankfully the metallic world, full of cars and chaos, now lay behind him. When he approached the country estate, he shouted to the blue and grey sky above him, "Thank God for nature, its colours, and its peace."

The whole country estate looked wonderful, and as the MusicMan stood up on his mountain bike, he whistled a tune to himself. And as it caught the air the wind seemed to echo a whole new symphony of sounds back to him in glorious autumn shades. The colours for some reason had been hidden from the human eye, but were now waiting to be discovered. A jogger came towards him showing signs of many miles in his face and legs. The MusicMan shouted to him in an upbeat tone, "Hello, there, Mr Jogger, how are you today?"

The Jogger man grunted something to the MusicMan about pain and duty, and something about being not too bad, then he focused on an image way out there in the concrete world behind the trees and grass. Thankfully, the dark choked up carbon monoxide world was now faraway from the MusicMan, and as he pedalled on he soon had trees for a ceiling and the sun and the sky as a light show above him. As the light came through the overlapping trees it created cosmic rays of, orange, violet, and blue, as if from another world: "Yes, life is a colour made young and old, a sense, a feeling of joy, a picture to watch as it just unfolds."

The train effect of trees on both sides of him, with all the autumn colours heaven has hatched from nature, made the MusicMan laugh. He wanted to runaway to that wonder world that seemed to lie out there on the edge of an ocean. Suddenly, a

squirrel jumped out from behind a Scots pine tree. It ran up and down a park bench till it came onto the road, and there it stopped and stared at the MusicMan on his bike. It gazed up at him as if frozen in time - never to move again. Then just before it moved off, the squirrel looked down at his bike and then up at the MusicMan again, as if wondering what he was doing on the same road as him through the country park estate. Then the squirrel headed for the bushes by the pond to hide in its own secret world, where sound is nothing but instinct, and feeling nothing but pure pleasure.

Not far away from where another small road cuts through the country estate, the MusicMan got off his bike and placed it up against a large oak tree. He sat there for a time up against the big tree. With his eyes shut, the MusicMan listened to the symphony of sounds coming from all over the country estate.

After a time the MusicMan brought out from inside his air force blue jacket a notebook. He started to jot down music notation. The MusicMan felt that the sounds made by the birds were like the secrets that lie in the wind, "They are forever telling us so much about so many things in so many ways. When the birds whistle their songs it seems to echo the time of day, and what season the earth is in."

Leaning against the old oak tree, the MusicMan filled a whole page of his notebook with music. And as he read the music back to himself, he felt it to be something new and wonderful, "One day I will capture all the sounds of nature and enclose them in a book," he promised himself.

He whistled the tune to himself for a time, until he heard voices coming from the little road behind him. When the MusicMan glanced through the bracken, he saw four rough and tumble figures - three young men, and a pretty girl who had blonde hair tied back in a ponytail coming towards him. He thought they looked like Blow boys and Blow girls from the Jungle Bar - but he didn't know any of them. The MusicMan gently let the leaves and branches go back into their natural positions. And

as the four figures walked by him, he heard one of the young men suggest, "Let's come to the park later tonight and have a rave."

The girl with the tied back blonde hair suggested that she could bring a few of her friends. Just then, one of the lads challenged the others to a race up to the picnic tables, where the road cuts off and makes another path. The two lads agreed and soon footsteps were heard running away. Someone shouted, "Come on you Blow heads, run."

The MusicMan closed his eyes, and started to think about the music he had just written. Then he thought about a concert that he would like to perform for the public, and how he would plan it so that people could pick up the book and hear the songs as well. A few moments later, the MusicMan climbed across his bike, and once more the autumn shades were moving by him on both sides of the path that led through the country estate.

Was it in the colours coming through the trees, or was it in the music that he had just written that filled his mind with fancy? Anyway, whatever it was, something made the MusicMan search out that wonderland through the trees that had purples and blues dancing all along its horizon line. Suddenly, he turned off the road, and headed down the dirt track, and began negotiating the tall pine trees and bushes. He pulled both brakes to slow himself down to a walking pace, but halfway down the steep hill the mountain bike got stuck between two mounds. In heavy slow motion the MusicMan found himself up in the air, then back on the saddle again, before being unceremoniously dumped onto the ground. Giddiness and dizziness quickly followed and wiped away any blues, purples or oranges from his mind. The dark brown leaves that now lay in front of the MusicMan, he felt, were there to remind him of the everyday dangerous world he lived in.

Lying there in the mud, the MusicMan moaned to himself, "Oh, I think I've broken something, it's sore."

Although lying face down, he managed to move his left hand up to his right shoulder, "I think it's my shoulder."

He lay quite still for a few moments. Then as he tried to move, he promised himself that if he could only just get up onto

his feet he would change: “I will do all the things I should have done. I’ve got to get up.”

It may have been a strange thought, but he kept saying to himself, “Come on, MusicMan, get up - you’ve got your musical book to finish.”

The pain ached and held him in a funny sort of way like a worldly-wise companion. Then a voice inside him said, “Don’t let the world tantalise you, MusicMan, with its colours and illusions. Mother earth will always bring you back down to size.”

Moving around a little to feel for any other injuries the MusicMan told himself, “I’ve got to get up to the top of that hill and onto the road and get some help.”

He managed to stumble to his feet, and he felt himself trying to connect with any colour or object around him in the hope that it would give him strength to carry on.

When he got to the top of the hill he started to feel faint and, as he put his head down, he reprimanded himself, “Why don’t you have more sense, MusicMan, and just stay on the road instead of flying around the world like a lunatic. You could have broken your neck and been down there for days, and no one would have found you. You could have been home by now, and getting ready for a night out with friends, and here you are staggering around the country estate like some World War hero.”

The tragic comedy continued when an elderly man appeared in a dark coat and thick dark glasses, and a white stick. As he came towards him, the MusicMan could see that the man could not see him. He was blind. The MusicMan held his shoulder, and as he hobbled towards him he said, “Excuse me sir, I’ve just had an accident on my bike. I think I have broken something.”

Years of being blind had taught the man to understand the human voice, and all its cries. As he paused on the road, the blind man slowly turned towards the voice of the MusicMan. Then the man said, “You must excuse me, I’m nearly blind,” then he added as if for compensation, “though I used to be a doctor.”

The MusicMan couldn’t hide his feelings, “That’s all I need.”

However, the autumn shades started to fade once more, and the MusicMan muttered, “I think I’m going to pass out.”

The old blind doctor, who had been retired for years, nodded. Then he gave our friend the MusicMan some good advice, “Just sit down, son.”

The advice was heeded and, as he sat down by the side of the road, life seemed to flow back into the MusicMan like some hidden truth. There on the damp grass by the road through the country estate, the MusicMan unzipped his air force blue bomber jacket, and beside him the blind doctor felt the air like a seer to find him. This time the MusicMan held out his hand, and directed the blind man’s hand towards his right shoulder.

The blind Doctor touched his jacket, then his shoulder. Quietly the doctor said, “I think it’s your collarbone you have broken, son.”

A car pulled up and before it moved off again, someone shouted, “I’ll alert the Park Rangers!”

Five minutes later two women with walkie-talkies arrived, and bent over the MusicMan, and true to their word - although later than promised - an ambulance arrived. The ambulance man, at first, drove passed the MusicMan. However, when he realised what he had done he slowly reversed, and as he got out of his cab the driver laughed and excused himself, saying, “Sorry we got lost - it’s such a big estate.”

Another ambulance man appeared, this time from the other side of the vehicle. Then the two of them carried the MusicMan into the ambulance. The comedy seemed complete when they bumped the MusicMan’s head off the roof of the ambulance as they carried him inside.

Presently, the ambulance gingerly moved through the country estate, with the MusicMan sitting in the back of it. And as it moved slowly along the little path, the MusicMan looked through a window of tiny green squares, and he once again studied a perfect perspective world that had not long ago tantalised him, and nearly killed him.

A man, a couple of years younger than the MusicMan, sat beside him in the back of the ambulance and watched him closely. The young ambulance man noticed how weak and shaky his passenger was and, with a daft look on his face, he held up an oxygen mask, and said to him,"You want some of this, mate?"

When the ambulance arrived at the hospital the MusicMan was carried out on a stretcher. The MusicMan stared at the bright light until he noticed a figure walk out of the casualty department; the man came from the same area as where he had been brought up. The man walked straight by him as if nothing was untoward, saying quite calmly, "Hi there, MusicMan," and gave him a nod.

The MusicMan laughed, "Some people never wake up. Here am I being carried out of an ambulance into a hospital, and there is Frank whatshisname walking by me, as if nothing is wrong - well I never."

Both sexes in white coats looked at him. Then after a time a dreamy young nurse came forward and, as she fixed her dark ponytail, she spoke to him in a relaxed tone, "And what have you been doing to yourself, then?"

The MusicMan told her all about his misadventure. And as her kind blue eyes stared at him, she smiled as if understanding why young men fly around the world on bikes and end up in hospitals. After she had collected all the information, so that she could relay it to one of the doctors, the nurse laughed at the MusicMan. She said with a huge smile on her face, as she walked away from him, "Now don't go away."

Sitting on the trolley, the MusicMan managed to take off his sky blue bomber jacket. When he saw all the mud on it, and the crazy pattern it made all over his jacket, he didn't know whether to wipe it off, or just leave it there lying on the hospital floor. It took two hours, two doctors and two x-rays before the young nurse put the MusicMan's arm in a sling. She said mechanically, as he stood up, "Now go home and rest, and take some painkillers," then she handed him the pills.

On his way home with every step, the MusicMan took, doubts crept into his head, and he couldn't help thinking: "You

will not be able to play the piano, or your guitar now, MusicMan - so how in the world are you going to finish writing the songs for the Music-lovers book? You're finished MusicMan. You will be on the dole for life. You're now a broken man, with a broken heart, and a broken wing."

# 9

When the MusicMan's eyes opened the next day, he immediately felt a dull sense of pain all over his shoulder area. His thoughts automatically transferred back to yesterday, and to the events before and after the accident. Sitting on the edge of his bed, he prayed for faith and courage. Then he stood up, and said to himself, "I'm not going there again - well not on my bike, anyway."

After black coffee and toast, the MusicMan walked outside to see if the fresh air would help him. Just as he turned the corner of his street a woman came towards him carrying messages, she stared intensely at the tenement building behind the MusicMan. Nearly knocking him over, she squawked, "Oh, I'm sorry," and walked by him.

The MusicMan took this as a warning, "Well, I guess it's an indication of things to come - especially when I go to the Jungle Bar. There they have forgotten all about the human race, its beauty and elegance. The Jungle Bar people will not bother about a man with a broken collarbone."

A picture of himself being pushed around here and there inside the Jungle Bar, seemed to make the pain worse in his shoulder. The MusicMan carried on walking and tried to catch the

morning sun on his face. Halfway along the street, the MusicMan could see a man coming towards him. The man had his head stuck inside a morning newspaper, and would have walked right through him if the MusicMan had not stepped out of his way, off the pavement and onto the road. The fascination of killers in print was too much for the man and, as he went by the MusicMan, he muttered to himself, "It's unbelievable, so it is; I mean the world is going mad - he killed all his family…"

Glad to be in the safety of the park, the MusicMan looked up at a tall elm tree, and there he watched a leaf fall to the ground. The changing seasons and all their wonder made him smile, and think about the passage of time, "Autumn will soon be here, then winter. The leaf that now falls to the ground you can see has played its part in this year's celebration - remember that MusicMan."

Suddenly, a voice behind him said, "And what has been happening to you, then?"

It was the Jewish woman who lived round the corner from the MusicMan. The MusicMan told her all about his accident, and how lucky he had been. For some reason the conversation made the Jewish woman think about doctors and other professional people. After saying to the MusicMan, "It looks sore," she added, "you know this area used to be full of doctors and other professional people - but they have all moved away."

If people had moved away from the area, then others must have arrived. So the MusicMan asked her, "And what sort of person lives here now?"

The Jewish woman, as if wondering what to say, let her shopping bags drop to the ground, and she looked over towards the built-up area beyond the park. The MusicMan could see on her face, that she meant the influx of the new home owning working class. He had to admit to himself, "Yes, life has certainly changed since the, 'if you have got it, flaunt it,' image has become fashionable. The working class have now pinned their hopes firmly on capitalism. I don't think they know that an economic system based on private ownership has failed before."

As they walked away from each other, the MusicMan couldn't help but wonder what would happen to him in this strange time just before the year two thousand, "Will I ever meet someone and fall in love again? Someone who will understand the artist, and how he stands outside time and just looks in. I don't want to wander around these tall sandstone buildings alone. Unfortunately, I live in a bizarre time: a time where people marry and wonder about divorce. This is an era where you are judged by your car, how distant you are from other people. This is an age full of passion and consumer craving - great for art, but terrible for life."

Up a little further he thought, "Remember, MusicMan, you're just like that leaf that fell from the tree to the ground. Play your part and write your stories and songs, and who knows you may find success in love and life yet."

The MusicMan, after walking round the park, headed for the chemist shop to buy some soap and toothpaste. Inside the small shop, the MusicMan waited to be served. And as he looked about here and there at the things on the shelves, a strange young man, in ordinary everyday clothes, came into the chemist shop. The strange young man went straight up to the front of the queue. The chemist, himself a young man around twenty must have seen him; for he came out from the open-plan back shop, and handed the young man a small bottle of something. The bottle had been placed in a white prescription bag.

The strange young man opened the bag, then the small bottle, and drank it back in one go. Then he handed the paper bag and small bottle back to the chemist and presently left the shop.

A debate followed between the chemist and the young lady assistant, as to why the young man had got himself into a nervous wreck state commonly known as cold turkey.

The young lady assistant thought the reason to be a social one: "He goes to that place in town they call the Jungle Bar, where they take all sorts of things to get high."

The MusicMan had never seen him at the Jungle Bar, but the scene did remind him of some of the Jungle Bar characters; he knew that some had got themselves so high that when they came

back down to earth they found themselves lost in the gutter. "And here you are wandering around complaining about a broken collarbone, MusicMan."

On his way back to his flat, the MusicMan bumped into an old school friend. The old school friend looked at the bandage on his arm. Then after inquiring about what had happened, the two men chatted about many things: for many years had past since they had seen one another, and they were now a mystery to each other. Presently, the MusicMan inquired about a mutual friend who played in a wild rock band, and who lived not that faraway from him.

The old school friend looked surprised. Then he answered, "He died on stage about six months ago."

"What happened?"

"Heart attack."

The MusicMan looked surprised, and he at once thought of the last time he had seen the man, who played in the wild rock band, inside the little music shop where they both bought strings for their guitars. The shop had closed down recently, and because of this the MusicMan had lost contact with many local artists.

The old school friend, who had had a longer time to think about it, than the MusicMan, said candidly, "It's the way he would have wanted to go."

Their parting words were about the national team's chances of winning at the national stadium that night. The old school friend looked up at the gathering dark clouds, coming over towards them from the north-east, and he said, "Well, it's going to be a typical night for it, anyway."

As the MusicMan walked away, in the direction of his flat, he wondered to himself, about the man who had died on stage, "He always had a wild reputation as a performer but…"

Then he thought about the young man in the chemist shop, and how the modern world has powers to seduce you, hidden in culture and fashion. Just then another thought came to mind: this time he saw a very sophisticated young lady. As she watched the wild man on stage she put her hand over her mouth to cover an

embarrassed laugh. The MusicMan recollected, "Yes, I remember that night, and how the wildness of life portrayed in sexual movements made her laugh."

A key opened the door and just as the MusicMan walked inside, the sweet voice of a friend echoed all around the walls of his close, "MusicMan, are you all right!"

Rhapsody ran up a little flight of stairs and when she got to the MusicMan she flung her arms around him - forgetting all about his accident. "I telephoned you, MusicMan, this morning as soon as I heard about the accident on your bike. Are you all right, darling?"

Not waiting for an answer Rhapsody cuddled him, and before a kiss she stroked his pale face. Rhapsody said tenderly, "You will need to behave, yourself, MusicMan."

Inside his apartment Rhapsody told the MusicMan that she would sort out things for him, "Just you sit there by the fire; I will tidy this place up, and make you something to eat."

Rhapsody stared at the books and tapes scattered all over the living room floor. Then she cracked a joke, "Have you been burgled recently, MusicMan?" and she made a sound like, ah, as if to mock him.

Rhapsody had been to the MusicMan's apartment many times before, and she knew he had little time for keeping it tidy. The MusicMan gently eased himself down onto the chair by the fireside. When he looked up he watched her bend down to pick up *J. M. Roberts, History of the World*, book, and he said to her with a smile, "Actually, I thought it looked pretty tidy, myself."

Rhapsody managed to cook the MusicMan a meal of chicken and chips. Later on when the darkness of the evening sky covered all the windows and the world on one side, they sat together on the flowering almond settee, and under the soft lights Rhapsody kissed the MusicMan and teased him about only having one hand to stroke her with.

In his defence the MusicMan told her that his broken heart caused him more pain than his broken wing. Rhapsody thought long and hard about this and, after asking him if it was the Queen

without a Crown who was to blame, she remembered how her father had always recommended whisky, sugar, and hot water, as a toddy for people who are feeling down. And with a smile in her beautiful dark chestnut eyes, she sprang off the settee and headed for the kitchen, saying to herself, "I know what I'll get you, MusicMan."

Feeling relaxed and fed up, the MusicMan looked at himself in a tiny reflection in the stainless steel metal around the fireplace and, as he waited for Rhapsody to return, he thought long and hard about the ups and downs of life. He remembered the night exhausted and drained, while working on the manuscript of the Music-lovers, how a sparkle came into his eye. He had been looking for something in a book. He didn't know it at the time, but the sparkle was a massive red blob of blood impinging on his foveal function. The MusicMan remembered how later that night he stared at himself in the small bathroom mirror, and how on the way to the hospital, the next day, he couldn't see a thing out of the Glasgow bus window. And how he laughed when he told himself, "Not to worry, they never clean the windows, anyway."

The MusicMan, as he sat there, thought about how the new generation - like the old - had fallen for money, and put people second, "The acceptable face of not working has become all too familiar with people. The unemployed are forgotten about and the arts cleverly put aside, while the trendy Money-lovers make the city tick."

He thought of signing on every second week, and how all they could offer him was a course somewhere, so that they could take his name off the unemployment figures. The MusicMan detested the new culture and their Money-loving ways. Suddenly, Rhapsody appeared like a nurse from heaven, and handed the MusicMan a small glass filled with whisky, hot water and sugar. And as he drank it back, she snuggled up beside him, "Now that will do you the world of good, MusicMan."

Rhapsody, relaxed and feeling in a good mood, started to talk about a famous man she had once read about in a fashion magazine, "He seemed to come and go, and then he disappeared

for a while. Then at the age of thirty he brought forward his best work, and met the woman he was destined to marry. They sailed away together through the calm Mediterranean and arrived at…"

# 10

As soon as he opened his eyes the MusicMan wondered to himself how he got to bed last night. And as he looked at the four blue wood-chipped painted walls around him, an image of Rhapsody came to mind. The MusicMan smiled to himself as the pain in his shoulder ached. Half asleep, he picked up the yellow old-fashioned alarm clock that was lying on the floor. As he looked at the time, he thought to himself, "It's amazing what a woman can do when she cares."

The MusicMan drew back the light blue quilt, and jumped out of bed, ready for another day on planet earth. However, a message carried in a worried impulse told him, "Cool it, MusicMan, remember the broken wing."

The MusicMan wandered into the bathroom and, as he picked up the bar of soap, he stared into the mirror and looked at the debris in his eye, "The cells, that have been pushed aside to make way for a stream of blood, still float around lost in space." Then he muttered to himself, as the water hit his face, "I hope and pray they will all find their way home."

Washing and dressing, and even playing the piano, seemed different when only one hand could do it. However, he did what he

could then, after a light lunch, the MusicMan headed into the city to see if he could buy a good book to cheer himself up.

When the MusicMan entered the big bookshop in Union Street - that used to be a bar - he bumped into a well-known figure from the Jungle Bar scene. The Nodding Horseman, who wandered around the city for gossip and news, gave a long hard look at his bandaged arm before nodding. "What's been happening to you, then, MusicMan?"

The MusicMan smiled sadly, and as his eye caught a book of poems by a Polish woman - who had won the Nobel Prize for literature - he replied, "I had an accident on my bike yesterday."

To this news the Nodding Horseman nodded many times, before saying, "This is big news; I must dash off and tell the others."

As the Nodding Horseman stared at him, the MusicMan wondered what sort of books the Nodding Horseman liked; but he couldn't ask him, for the Nodding Horseman was out of the shop, and on his way back to report to his cronies, before the MusicMan could say, "Fractured clavicle."

The MusicMan picked up the book in front of him. However, he hardly looked at it; for he did start to wonder if his accident would affect his chances of getting money from the man in London who went by the name of Mr Oz, "Oh, well, I guess we will just have to wait and see."

About half-an-hour later the MusicMan left the bookshop. He crossed the road and walked away from the old Ca'd'Oro building. On the other side of the street he bumped into a man the people from the Jungle Bar call Fab the Fabulous. Fab used to be the lead singer with a popular band, in fact he had been on TV; and the people who go to the Jungle Bar reckon that ever since appearing on TV, everything in life has become wonderful to him, fabulous even.

When the MusicMan asked him how he was, naturally he replied, "Fabulous, MusicMan, I really am fabulous."

Fab smiled at the MusicMan and, seeing that he had had an accident, he made him an offer, "Looks like you could do with a drink, MusicMan."

The MusicMan agreed with him, and Fab pointed down to the far end of Gordon Street, opposite Central station. Then he said, "I know this little bar where all the characters reflect life, and all its wonder. Let me buy you a drink, there, MusicMan."

The MusicMan smiled and said, "Right, let's go, Fab."

So, Fab the Fabulous and the MusicMan walked into Bar Bizarre, at the end of Gordon Street and, as they both stood at the counter waiting to be served, Fab pointed out to the MusicMan some of the strange characters who come to the bar every day at lunch time: "Standing next to you, MusicMan, you will recognise the man who has waited for the world to come to him. He is talking to the man who does not believe in anything, and watching them is the man who goes to bars, and who no one speaks to. Standing behind you, MusicMan, is the man who has never had a job, and over in the corner, next to the jukebox, is the man who has been saved from himself. He is talking to the man who says that he has held time in his hands. Puffing on a cigarette and looking away from them is the man who has lost everything, and who says he is waiting for the chance to get it all back again. And close by him is the man who worries for the world. He is staring into the eyes of the man who can't tell fact from fiction. The bar woman is serving the man who jokes about everything. He is buying a drink for his pal the man who has been made to feel worthless. Also at the bar in Bar Bizarre, waiting to be served, is the man who believes in fashion, along with the man who has no idea of time, the Breakdown man, the man who stared for a whole day at the world and saw nothing, the nearly made it man, the man who is mixed up; and finally, the man who is stuck inside a song."

Fab the Fabulous smiled at the MusicMan, and before catching the eye of the barmaid, he added in a booming voice, "Isn't life just fabulous, MusicMan."

The MusicMan wondered to himself how a bar could reflect life through the faces of its customers; and as he stared at the man who has been saved, he said to Fab, "Yes, it really is a wonderfully weird place, right enough."

"I thought you would like it, MusicMan."

The MusicMan knew that Bar Bizarre had a long history of being in and out of fashion, and that over the years many different people had been in charge of it. As the MusicMan and Fab the Fabulous stood at the bar, they talked about all the things that were going on, at that moment, in and around the Jungle Bar scene.

Fab hated no one, but he never talked about the Money-lovers. The MusicMan told him that the Money-lovers were starting to take an interest in his musical book. Fab picked up his gin and tonic, and saluted the MusicMan, "I wish you well, MusicMan, I do indeed - remember life is fabulous."

Just then, one of the men from the bar, who went by the name of the Breakdown man, came over to speak to Fab, and soon they were talking about the wonder ways of life. Fab, who lived life to the full, came to the conclusion that the world loved him because he loved the world, "It's fabulous, MusicMan, life reflects back to me my own understanding of it."

The Breakdown man had a different view, "Life is certainly fabulous, and wonderful and all that - but it is also frightening and unpredictable. One day you're on top of the world, then the next day, crash, bang, wallop, and your world has fallen apart. Everything that has been together is now apart, and all the pieces are scattered near and far for you to pick up. And you who knew the world so well can do nothing about it. In fact, the only thing you can do, when you're having a breakdown, is hold onto an image that you feel secure with, and hope that you can get through the red tooth and claw world for another day."

Fab lit a big cigar and, as he blew the smoke out of his mouth, he admitted to his friends, "I have never had a breakdown."

The Breakdown man bowed his head when he heard someone else say the word 'breakdown,' as if to protect himself

against the invisible force that can come at any time and annoy you. After this the Breakdown man sipped his pint, and gave a canny nod to the MusicMan.

The MusicMan wondered about the invisible force that can bring a man to his knees, and he asked the Breakdown man, as he looked into his rapid moving engaging eyes, "What happens when you have a breakdown?"

The Breakdown man smiled at the MusicMan, as if to say it's unbelievable, then he answered him, "It's a funny thing to explain, MusicMan, but everything goes out of sync. The world out there no longer corresponds to the one going on inside you."

The Breakdown man held up his hands to show that words were strange things when the human condition was being reborn, "It's a hard thing to describe, MusicMan."

To change the subject, the Breakdown man shouted over to the man, who they say is stuck inside a song, to come over. As the man who is stuck inside a song made his way over, the Breakdown man turned to the MusicMan, and said sorrowfully, "He used to be a famous drummer in a popular band. However, after the band split up he went all funny in the head, and ever since then he has gone around singing their last hit song all the time."

The Breakdown man looked into the MusicMan's eyes, and as he stared at him he said with a huge smile on his face, "They say he may never get out again."

Although, the MusicMan laughed, he replied in a serious tone, "Goodness me, I never knew it was that easy to get stuck inside a song."

The MusicMan bought a round of beer, and for a time he listened to the men, who frequent Bar Bizarre, talk about their lives. Then after an hour or so everyone, including the MusicMan, seemed to have some commitment or other, and they all left Bar Bizarre.

11

On his way home, the MusicMan went to see a watchmaker man. He had left a Chronograph watch with him a while ago. The watch, bought in Trieste just after the Second World War, belonged to his father. On the south side of the city, a man with white hair, wearing a dark blue slipover, inside the shop, who had a round black magnifying glass stuck in one eye, now and again looked up from working, and gazed through a two-way mirror. At ten past four that day he observed a figure he could not quite remember come into his shop.

When he came to the counter the MusicMan thought him funny. As the watchmaker stood there looking at him, with one eye shut and the other looking at him through the magnifying glass, the MusicMan thought to himself," I wonder what a MusicMan's face looks like when it is out of focus."

The MusicMan handed him the ticket and waited in hope for the watch. The watchmaker man looked at the number 702, on the ticket, then he went into a drawer under the counter. After a search, he turned round to face the MusicMan, and he said mechanically, "Unfortunately, I could not get the part for this watch."

The MusicMan looked at the date of the morning paper, next to the envelope that held the watch face. Then he noticed the date when the watch had been handed over to the watchmaker man. Feeling annoyed the MusicMan said angrily, "You've had the watch for over a year, and now you tell me you can't find the missing part for it."

The watchmaker man had not been spoken to like this for many a long year, and the magnifying glass flew out of his eye. Looking shocked, the watchmaker man said with two eyes staring at the MusicMan, "I'm sorry, what did you say?"

The MusicMan grabbed the watch and put it in his pocket, then he shouted at him, "You have no idea of time. I mean you could have written to me, and I could have sent it away to someone else!"

From the watchmaker man's shop to his apartment the MusicMan couldn't help but wonder why he didn't fix it. Then suddenly his thoughts fell upon time, and he smiled as some poetic words came to mind: "The tick-tock of a clock is there to remind us that we are all just passing through. Day meets day, and the seasons fall into our laps like old friends. Nice to see you, MusicMan, it's going to be cold this winter, you had better wrap up…"

The man of music laughed at his thoughts and stared over at the factory where they made pumps and, as he walked by the factory gates, he caught sight of some men clocking in for their shifts, and the work ethic reminded him about his own career, and he hurried back to work on the Music-lovers songs for his musical novel.

When he got home he started working on the songs, and just as he was halfway through playing the theme tune the telephone rang. "I've got you a ticket for the Jungle Bar fancy dress party, MusicMan, I'll drop it of sometime tomorrow," said a voice, in a childlike happy tone.

The voice belonged to the man the Jungle Bar people call the Restaurateur. The MusicMan liked the idea, but his broken collarbone gave him a problem as to what he was going to wear.

"You've broken your collarbone. How did you do that?"

The MusicMan told him all about what had happened, and speaking about it, the accident soon fell into the past, unusual events in time and space, and they became part of the natural world again. It wasn't long until the two men started to chat about some of the lovely Jungle Bar girls. The Restaurateur loved Rose, Rhapsody, the Queen without a Crown, and Flower girl. In fact, he loved all the Jungle Bar young ladies, for that matter. He said to the MusicMan, as if to support an outrageous ego, "I want to taste them all, MusicMan."

Signing off, the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur promised to see the MusicMan, soon, "I'll give you a call, MusicMan," and after laughing he added, "now remember, MusicMan, watch yourself on that bike of yours."

In preparation for the fancy dress party next week, the MusicMan headed over to the west end of the city. He remembered there was a shop just off Byres Road that sold and hired out fancy dress costumes.

Once there, over in the west end, the MusicMan watched the students as they made their way up towards the university. A young lady, in jeans and white shirt, carrying a large book titled: *Art of the Western World*, smiled at him, and made him wonder why west end girls are so forward. As he turned off the main road, and up a little side street, he thought to himself, "Must be all those books they read."

Inside the theatrical shop a strange woman, dressed from head to foot in black, looked at the MusicMan. She for some reason had powdered her face white, and her dark eyes were ringed with kohl.

The MusicMan thought to himself, as he shut the door, "I think she must be part of some weird cult, or some religious group."

Over to his right a door creaked, and two black cats presently came out from under a table, that had lots of cut up material on it, and looked up at him. The strange creature, who worked in the theatrical shop, with the white face and black eyes, got up from her

chair behind the counter and came forward. As she looked into the MusicMan's eyes, she said in a smooth tone, "Yes, can I help you, young man?"

As she stared at him he could see that her dark eyes were really chocolate brown and, as they made mystic signs at him, he laughed, then to cover the indiscretion the MusicMan coughed.

A few seconds later, the MusicMan said to her in a friendly tone, "I'm going to a fancy dress party tomorrow night, so I'm looking for something to wear."

The strange woman in the shop smiled at him, as if reading his thoughts, "Are you?"

Viewing what was around him, he asked, "Can I have a look around the shop?"

The weird woman cast her hand back in a gesture of welcome, "You certainly can, young man."

Still smiling, the MusicMan looked around the shop and, after he had picked up an old dinner suit jacket that just happened to be lying over a chair, he told the weird-looking woman a little bit more about why he had come to her shop: "The fancy dress party is on at the Jungle Bar soon, and I'm stuck for something to wear," he said in an easygoing tone.

The weird-looking woman nodded that she understood. Feeling a bit more at ease now the MusicMan asked her, "Are you going?"

The weird-looking woman laughed, as if a cheeky boy had just punched her in the stomach. Then she trailed a long finger down the lapel of the dinner jacket that was still in his hand. She replied in a deep sexy voice, "I certainly am not, young man."

The weird-looking woman picked up another dinner suit jacket, and as she hung it up beside many others, she added, "However, I did have a few horrible characters in here this morning who said they were going."

She then paused and stared at a blue budgie in a cage over on the lefthand side of the shop. Then she said evenly, "Now, let me see what were they called again. Oh, yes, the Nodding Horseman,

the Gorilla, and a man who claimed to be a king, but who really was a clown - friends of yours, I suppose."

The MusicMan stopped looking at the costumes, and stared at the weird-looking woman's chocolate coloured eyes. He wondered if she knew them. So after a second or two, he replied diplomatically, "Well, I wouldn't say they were friends of mine - but I know them."

The weird-looking woman came very close to him - their faces nearly touching - and she looked at him long and hard. The MusicMan detected passion and excitement in the air, and as he stared at her he couldn't help thinking to himself, "Some of these west end women are really funny. I wonder if she is going to kiss me just to freak me out."

Seeing him distracted the weird-looking woman turned away and gazed around her shop, "I suppose it's something unique you're after to go to the Jungle Bar fancy dress party in."

She then walked forward and stopped in front of a rail full of corsets and crazy underclothes. Then she looked over her shoulder and, as she moved around the rail, she said coaxingly to the MusicMan, "Why not try on this green Lurex dress. The colour green is very popular, I believe, with some of the creatures down at the Jungle Bar, at the moment."

As if trying to get out of the spotlight of madness the weird-looking woman, who worked in the little theatrical shop just off Byres Road, said, "Oh, but you have broken your arm - how silly of me."

After laughing to herself she put the dress back on the rack, and just as she let go of it the door opened and in came a man dressed in an old-fashioned three-buttoned suit, with short dark hair, who wore thick black-rimmed glasses. The weird-looking woman immediately ran towards him, and in a lisp voice she cried out, "Sebastian."

Sebastian greeted her with a kiss, and they started talking about a party somewhere in the west end, that they both had been invited to. The weird-looking woman clapped her hands and

jumped once, then twice, into the air, before screaming, "Super, Sebastian, really super!"

At this point, the MusicMan took the opportunity to look around the shop, and see if he could find himself something to wear for the Jungle Bar fancy dress party. Looking up at the up-to-date section the MusicMan wondered, "No I'm not a punk, and I'm not a teddy boy, and I'm not a funky cowboy, cavalier, or spaceman."

However, he did stop at the military section, and his eye fixed on an old army uniform, "Yes, of course - that's it - I can go as a wounded soldier."

The weird-looking woman told Sebastian that she would not be a tick. Then as she walked towards the MusicMan, she muttered something to herself about the two of them being as thick as thieves when it came to west end dinner parties.

In the middle of the theatrical shop, she stopped and gave herself time to imagine the man in front of her in battledress. Then she exclaimed wildly, "Oh, I do like a man in uniform - yes I do."

# 12

The fancy dress party was scheduled for nine thirty at the Jungle Bar, and only people with tickets would be allowed in. The MusicMan did not complain, but if truth be told, he struggled to get ready that night. As he pushed a button through a buttonhole in his battledress, he admitted to himself, "Everything seems different when you switch over to your left-hand mode."

Somehow over the next hour the MusicMan managed to transform himself into a soldier, and there in the large looking glass mirror, in the living room, he saluted himself. Smiling at the soldier, the MusicMan thought, "I could be off to Monte Cassino, or to defend the Maginot Line."

Just before leaving his flat, the MusicMan pinned a medal, that he had picked up at the little antique shop just round the corner from him, onto his battledress.

On his way to the Jungle Bar, the MusicMan bumped into a young woman who stayed with her lover at weekends. Her lover the MusicMan did not know. All he knew about him was that he stayed somewhere near the recreational football parks. The young lady smiled at him, "Well, what's this MusicMan, off to fight world war three."

The MusicMan tried to mix fiction with fashion by saying to her that he had joined a new cult who went around the city in old-fashioned army uniforms - but he couldn't keep it up. The MusicMan laughed, then he told her, "No, tonight is the Jungle Bar fancy dress party."

Never quite believing the man with the classical face at the best of times, she smiled. Then the young lady looked up and down his battledress, until she remembered something, "That's right Sal the Wonder Gal is going," and after thinking about what she had just said, the young lady added in a low mocking tone, "I bet she is going as Superwoman."

The MusicMan knew Sal the Wonder Gal, and replied, "Yes, probably."

After saying goodbye to the young lady who stayed with her lover at weekends, the MusicMan walked to the bus stop. As he walked on he looked up and down at the weekend windows of the flats, and once again he listened to the sounds of music, and the voices of people who were getting ready to celebrate the weekend.

Feeling something in the evening air, the MusicMan thought to himself, "I wonder if Rhapsody will be there tonight, or will the Queen without a Crown come over to me and whisper into my ear, and tell me about some late night rendezvous where lovers meet."

His nighttime ambitions seemed to float over the late night summer sky, and a sense of the unbelievable filled his mind with thoughts of how lovers meet and then depart.

Across from the bus stop a beautiful full moon came into view through the trees, and lit up the park, where only a week ago a man had been killed at the bandstand. As the MusicMan stared at the scene, he suddenly felt overpowered by a wonderful fantastic feeling, as regards how things in life are revealed. The MusicMan trembled, and the spell seemed only to be broken by the arrival of a bus making its way out of town.

At the door of the Jungle Bar collecting tickets stood a steward dressed as a boxer. The boxer saluted the soldier then,

after sparring with him, he smiled and said, "Good to see you, MusicMan."

Once inside the Jungle Bar, the MusicMan thought he had entered into a cartoon world: for there were fantastic creatures everywhere. Two flamenco dancers came forward and greeted him, one of them said in a caring voice, "MusicMan we heard about your accident. How are you?"

Then the other one asked, "Are you all right?"

The MusicMan took a few seconds to recognise Jujube and Flower girl. He greeted them both with a kiss, and then he told them, "Yes, I'm fine."

With a quick look around the Jungle Bar, the MusicMan noticed bowls of punch lying here and there on every table. The dancing barman who had a Tarzan outfit on shouted to the MusicMan, "Whisky and ice?"

The MusicMan seeing it was a special night shouted back, "And a beer!"

At the Jungle Bar, the MusicMan could see footballers, deep-sea divers, Disney characters, and many more he could not fathom out. He also noticed that many of the Jungle Bar men had dressed as women, "Any old excuse," he thought to himself.

The MusicMan shouted over at one or two of them, "How are you. I hardly recognised you. You're looking terrific."

Doctor High came to the party dressed as one of the Three Musketeers, "D'Artagnan at your service, MusicMan!"

Doctor High fenced an invisible foe until he killed him. Then he placed his sword up against the Jungle Bar, and ordered a large gin. Full of high jinks, the Doctor looked at the MusicMan and said, "Were you wearing that outfit when you crashed your bike in the country estate, MusicMan," then he grabbed him and danced with him.

The MusicMan laughed at his friend and, as he watched him dance to the wild Jungle Bar music, he told him what had happened. However, halfway through the story, two young Jungle Bar girls dressed as jockeys walked by them.

When Doctor High's eyes caught the young ladies attention, the man who had come to the fancy dress party as D'Artagnan - and the great lover of the double entendre - asked one of them, "Riding tonight, ladies?"

The young lady with the long dark hair and slim sensual body took her whip out, from under her arm - where she had temporary placed it - and as she held it in her right-hand, she gently tapped the palm of her other hand with it. Then she said to the Doctor calmly, "Yes, I'm looking for a good jumper."

Many of the Jungle Bar characters laughed and cheered as she threatened to horsewhip the Doctor if he did not get out of her way. The Doctor looked at his sword, that just happened to be lying up against the Jungle Bar, and he wondered if he should sword fence her. However, with a twinkle in his eye he got down on the Jungle Bar floor, as if to be mounted. Laughing he said, "Sounds fine to me."

Doctor High continued to tease the young Jungle Bar girls till they all escaped into the pack. Not long after this King Clown, the Gorilla man, and the Nodding Horseman arrived at the party.

The MusicMan knew that they had been to the same outfitters as he had; but he didn't know that they had hired costumes according to their Jungle Bar characters. King Clown looked a happy but sad clown in a white outfit that had huge circles of colour all over it. The MusicMan thought the Gorilla man looked at home in his hairy outfit, and the Nodding Horseman looked like a pantomime horse you see in a play at the local church hall.

It wasn't long till the three well-known Money-lovers were ordering drinks, and chanting their favourite song: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

About half-an-hour later the Money-lovers started to circulate among the party guests. In a voice full of pretence, King Clown said to the MusicMan, "I've been hearing about your little accident, MusicMan."

The MusicMan reassured him that it was not serious. As he looked down at his arm that was in a sling, he said, "I should be back playing the piano and guitar in no time at all."

The Incredible Carpet Salesman arrived at the Jungle Bar party, dressed as Ali Baba. His sidekick Ribbentrop the well-known Glasgow poet, for some reason had come to the fancy party dressed as Abraham Lincoln.

The MusicMan asked them if they had seen the Restaurateur and El Greco, on their way to the Jungle Bar. The Incredible Carpet Salesman, sitting at the Jungle Bar, smiled as if knowing what they would be up to. Then after a drink of champagne he reassured his friend, the MusicMan, in a hearty voice, "Oh, don't worry, they'll be along soon."

And he was right, not long after this the two men appeared at the Jungle Bar; apparently the Restaurateur had been in a bit of a tizzy about what he should wear. However, in the kitchen he negotiated with the chef, over a pint of German beer, and ended up hiring his outfit for the night. El Greco, dressed in a white toga and green laurel crown, had come to the party as Socrates.

It didn't take long for the Music-lovers to start dancing and smooching; the ones who had more to drink than the others started singing and jumping up and down.

Lulu the top fashion designer, for the people who went to the Jungle Bar, arrived at the party dressed as Fidel Castro and, being a lover of all things Latin, he complimented Flower girl and Jujube on their outfits. In a sophisticated smooth voice, he said, "Ladies, I think you have excelled yourselves tonight. Your outfits are beautiful."

Lulu kissed them both then lit a large cigar and, when he noticed his Music-loving friends at the Jungle Bar, he slowly walked over to them.

Next to where the Music-lovers were standing, King Clown and his Money-loving mates were drinking. Their number had just been increased by the arrival of the man, the Jungle Bar people call, Mr Rattler. The Rattler had come to the fancy dress party dressed as Dracula.

The Gorilla man shouted through a hole in his mask, "I might have known it," and as he pointed at the cape around his neck, he shouted, "Watch out all you blue fur ladies, and funky vampires, tonight!"

Even though the Rattler man did not like the Gorilla he put up with the slagging because of the other Money-lovers around him.

After laughing at the Money-lovers, El Greco inquired as to the health of the MusicMan. He said in a thoughtful deep academic voice, "Are you on pain killers, MusicMan?"

The MusicMan held up his glass and replied, "Whisky and ice."

El Greco laughed and noticed for the first time that the MusicMan had put tomato sauce on his bandaged arm to give it an authentic war look. Full of fun, he asked him, "Have you just come back from the Russian front, MusicMan?"

Before the MusicMan could answer him, Doctor High came over and joined in the fun, "MusicMan, all the Jungle Bar girls are wanting to know if you will show them your war wound?"

Just for a moment, the MusicMan felt the centre of attraction at the Jungle Bar. Many of his friends started talking about his accident, and how he had broken his collarbone. Then after a few more rounds of beer the Music-lovers all started dancing again.

The Restaurateur led the clapping, and El Greco, who the MusicMan for that matter thought looked more like Alexander the Great than Socrates or Plato, danced in the middle of the circle, shoeless and unbridled, and proclaimed love to be a Greek thing: a mixture of contrivance and poverty - just like his ancestors had done a long time before Socrates.

When the Money-lovers saw the Music-lovers dancing and having such a good time, they too started dancing. King Clown shuffled around his horrible pack, and said to the Rattler man when he came across him, "Tell me, Mr Rattler, how do I get the Queen without a Crown to fall in love with me?"

The Rattler man stopped dancing and put his hand to his mouth. Then he said in a sneaky voice, "This is what you do, King

Clown, you wine her and dine her. When she sees the colour of your money she will fall in love with you."

King Clown laughed, and as he looked over to where the Queen without a Crown was standing, with her Blow boys and Blow girls, he suddenly realised that although she knew him to be filthy rich she had never actually seen the colour of his money.

A little later when the Jungle Bar party seemed to settle down the Gorilla man came over to speak to the MusicMan, "How's the arm MusicMan?" Then he added, as if off the cuff, "Listen, MusicMan, we like the idea of the musical book, and we would like you to come to London with us, and meet the man who has a finger in every financial pie namely: Mr Oz."

The MusicMan accepted the invitation, but he knew the Money-lovers would be out for themselves. But what option did he have? King Clown sensed something in the air, and went over and put his arm around the MusicMan and told him that he would look after him,"You'll be all right; I'll be there."

The MusicMan reflected, "Yea, that will be right," but he thought it best just to say, "Yes, I'm looking forward to London, and meeting the man they call Mr Oz."

King Clown muttered something about how he knew Oz from the old days when they worked together in television, and how Mr Oz was nearly as big a Money-lover as he himself was. However, the Clown broke off in mid-sentence and started going on about the Queen without a Crown, "I tell you, MusicMan, I'm going to break her pretty red heart."

Just behind King Clown, the Nodding Horseman laughed, and of course nodded to indicate that he was telling the truth. Poor Old Lickspittle came to the fancy dress party dressed as Burlington Bertie. He looked worse for wear: for he had been out drinking since five thirty with business friends. At the Jungle Bar, he got his words all tangled up when he tried to order a round of drinks from Tarzan the dancing barman, "Eh, key wottles of ear, and a largge vim and hawk, hic," slurred Old Lickspittle.

Lucky for Old Lickspittle the dancing barman, dressed up as Tarzan, had a good memory for faces, and what they drank. Old

Lickspittle, in top hat and tails, by the way had no trouble in collecting the order and drinking his drink.

The Rattler, as he looked at his expensive watch, told King Clown the reason why he had come to the fancy dress party dressed as Dracula: "Dracula used to rattle people after midnight - right," then he laughed a weird laugh.

King Clown cackled, and as the two of them stood together at the Jungle Bar, they stared at some of the Queen's Blow boys and Blow girls, dressed as flappers a la nineteen twenty. With a face full of passion and grief, the Rattler added, "Yes, I may just rattle a few of them later on, tonight."

One or two Jungle Bar girls, who were dressed as bunnies, overhead the Rattler and, as they walked by him at the Jungle Bar, one of them said, as she looked at him, "He's a dirty old man, him," then as they ran away to the other side of the Jungle Bar, another bunny girl - who looked older - warned her friend about the ways of life in a big Jungle Bar City, "Honey, the first thing you learn when you become a Jungle Bar girl is to keep clear of the man they call, Mr Rattler."

The MusicMan thought that if there was to be a prize tonight for the best fancy dress outfit; then the chap who had come to the party as Charlie Chaplin would win it. One of Charlie's mates, however, did not agree, and he threw some fruit from the punch bowl at him. Charlie, ducked and shouted back,"Honest, I'm not a communist," then he disappeared into the pack.

Like all bars around the world the Jungle Bar has its popular songs, and when Tarzan the dancing barman put on one of their favourite songs the whole place erupted, and everyone started dancing and clapping.

Even though all the characters were in fancy dress, the MusicMan could just about make out who was who, as they jumped up and down. The MusicMan, as he stared at the crowd of people in front of him, reflected, "It's as if the Jungle Bar characters are acting out their fantasies in real life. If someone had asked me beforehand to imagine what costumes they would have

come in, I don't think I would have been far wrong - well okay, except for Abraham Lincoln."

The MusicMan clapped to the beat of the wild Jungle Bar music, and in the middle of the dancers a Sugarplum fairy winked at him. Then Ali Baba's face appeared beside her. Not long after this a very drunken Carpet Salesman came over, and planted a wet kiss on the cheek of a soldier who liked music, "I love you, MusicMan."

The Incredible Carpet Salesman looked at the MusicMan with huge saucer eyes. Then he shouted, so that all the Jungle Bar people, could hear him, "Ali Baba, is a rock'n'roller!"

Just then Ribbentrop appeared and informed the drunken Carpet Salesman where the Sugarplum fairy had gone to. As he headed after her, the Incredible Carpet Salesman muttered to himself, "I can tell she's a big Ali Baba fan…"

Sensing the occasion the Restaurateur wondered if he should throw a little party later on, for his Music-loving friends, back at his restaurant.

The MusicMan thought it a good idea, and so did El Greco, and knowing that there would be only Music-lovers there they all looked forward to it. Anticipating what would happen when they got there, El Greco said to his friend the MusicMan, "We can't let our friend the Restaurateur cook us a meal again - even if he is dressed up as a chef."

The two men laughed. Then the MusicMan reassured his friend that everything would be all right, "He'll have some food already cooked and prepared for us. When we get there we will be able to relax, and have a good time."

Looking at the man in the toga the MusicMan added, "And there is nothing you Greeks like better than to talk - is there, now?"

El Greco nodded, and laughed, "Yes, you're right there, MusicMan."

Not faraway from the MusicMan stood poor Old Lickspittle, dressed as Burlington Bertie, Old Lickspittle could be heard talking to the Gorilla man about a dark night, many years ago, when he and King Clown cleared out an old woman's house, "Her

husband poor thing had just died, and the woman wanted to get rid of some old China, and some old Scottish paintings - of course we gave her fifty quid for the lot."

The two Money-lovers roared with laughter, then they started singing their favourite song: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

The Money-lovers, who went to the Jungle Bar, were forever using lawyers to keep themselves out of jail. The men from the legal profession liked to pop into the Jungle Bar before going home. So naturally they thought it a good idea to come to the fancy dress party dressed as Judges: in wigs and gowns.

When Old Lickspittle spotted the three Judges he sent over some drinks to their table. Presently, the waitress arrived with the drinks. She interrupted one of the three Judges, who was busy telling a story about a worker who had taken his employer to court, for not having any peas on the canteen menu for lunch. As she put the third bottle of beer down on the table for the three Judges, she said in an offhand common sort of way, "From the Money-lovers."

The three Judges liked nothing better than to sit and to sip their beer, and watch the Jungle Bar people have fun.

One of the Judges commented, "It is strange to see some of them enjoying themselves, don't you think, when they know fine well they will be up in court next week."

The other two Judges laughed. Then one answered sympathetically, "Oh, leave them alone, let them have their fun while they can."

As I have said, Money-lovers and solicitors are inseparable, and it wasn't long till King Clown sent them over some more drinks. He knew that his instructions were always carried out to the letter of the law, especially to extract money from the poor.

Doctor High knew everybody in the Jungle Bar. His love pills, the Jungle Bar people say, are in demand from both rich and poor. When he found himself beside the three Judges - he had been chasing a pretty young thing round the bar and ended up there - he kissed the girl he was with. Then he turned towards the three

Judges, and winked at the men in robes and gowns, as if to show them how easy love is for a Musketeer at the Jungle Bar.

Meanwhile, at the bar some Money-lovers were reflecting on how they had met, and how it had all started. Old Lickspittle told the Gorilla man, in a pompous voice, "Yes, when I met King Clown, he was just a lad, but even then, I saw in him the rapacious spirit - that one has to have in this city - to be a notable Money-lover."

After he had finished dancing with the Nodding Horseman, King Clown joined Old Lickspittle at the bar. Old Lickspittle tried to get him to talk about their illicit past. But King Clown never discussed the past with anyone. He understood that it was all too easy to end up in court, just because of a word said at the Jungle Bar.

King Clown, after listening to Old Lickspittle, changed the subject. As he twirled his ear lobe, he said in a daft voice, "Golly gosh, did you see that. The woman they call the Queen without a Crown has just agreed to dance with that Greek chap."

The Gorilla man lifted his head out of the heavy all-in-one gorilla suit to let some air in, and as he looked over at the Queen, he heard King Clown say in a serious tone, "I will break the Queen's pretty red heart just you wait and see."

The Rattler popped up to pull King Clown's leg, "She may be a bit young for you, you know."

King Clown started to act daft, and as he laughed he moved his hands in a gesture of comedy, as if he was stroking the face of a Queen. Then he answered the Rattler man, "They are never too young to rattle - are they Mr Rattler."

The Money-lovers loved this, and they all cheered and started to sing the Money-lovers song again: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

When El Greco had finished dancing with the Queen without a Crown, the Restaurateur asked him to spill the beans: "What did she say to you, then?"

El Greco kept his council, but when pushed he protested, “Mr Restaurateur, a gentleman never discusses a lady - let alone a Queen.”

The two devotees took their drinks in their hands. Then the two men tried to work out everything a man should know about a woman, so that they could take advantage of them in the future. Seeing the opportunity for a dance the Rattler man sneaked away from his Money-loving friends, and introduced himself to the Queen without a Crown, at the far end of the Jungle Bar. Holding out his hand, he said formally, “Would you like to dance?”

The Queen had heard all about Mr Rattler from her Blow boys and Blow girls, and she politely declined, “No thanks, I’m sitting this one out.”

But the Queen did not want to offend Mr Rattler, so she made a comment about his outfit, “I hope you’re not going to be biting anyone after midnight, tonight, Mr Rattler.”

Not faraway one of the Money-lovers at the Jungle Bar started to tease King Clown, “Look, the Rattler is in there.”

King Clown, who knew a thing or two about how to bring people down, called the Rattler man one of the worst names in the Jungle Bar, “She is not interested in him - he’s a fumbler.”

The Restaurateur by this time had had far too much to drink, and he started to make mad faces and transfer them to whoever was walking by him at the Jungle Bar.

Gently squeezing the MusicMan’s arm, he said to him, “Right, MusicMan, let’s grab a couple of Jungle Bar girls, and take them back to my restaurant.”

Trying to test his luck the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur went into the Jungle Bar dancers. There he started to mumble to himself a lot of rubbish about some Eurasian girl who had a fantastic body, and when he came back to the MusicMan, a few moments later, he opened his hands in supplication, and said in a tipsy tone, “Well, you never know, MusicMan, who you meet at the Jungle Bar - do you.”

For some reason Rhapsody and Rose could not make it to the Jungle Bar fancy dress party, and this gave the MusicMan

problems: "Who can I invite back to my friend's restaurant on the south side of the city, tonight?" he wondered to himself.

El Greco wondered if the Queen without a Crown would come back with two or three Blow girls. The Restaurateur, on the other hand, had no illusions as regards her social standing, "She won't come back. She will be going to some fancy party in the west end, no doubt."

As the man of food and comedy created all sorts of things out of all sorts of possibilities, the man of music remembered a night when the Queen without a Crown invited him home, "Yes, that was the night she danced for me in the middle of the room. That was the night she came close to me and whispered, MusicMan, come…"

Doctor High, by this time, had taken too many love pills and too many gins. The Doctor started kissing all the Jungle Bar girls he came across. He said as he moved from one to the other, "Lovely girl. Lovely girl."

The Restaurateur rolled about the dance floor for a time, and when he came back to the Jungle Bar, he said to the MusicMan, "That Doctor High is some man. Did you see him kissing all the Jungle Bar women?"

The MusicMan had met the Doctor many years ago, and the two of them had remained friends. The MusicMan said to the Restaurateur, with a nod, as he watched the Doctor dance, "Yes, he's a real character, all right."

At the Bar the MusicMan deliberated about life. In a long night-time reflection, that did not seem to inhabit the world around him, he thought to himself, "The Jungle Bar is a fantastic place where you can meet people and disappear with them. You can remain friends for life, or you can find love and lose it all in one night."

However, the man of music knew that behind the glitter and emerald image, lay evil waiting to pull you down. As he stood there thinking about the Jungle Bar scene, he remembered a young man who had gone wrong: "He used to come in hear and drink with some of the Jungle Bar boys. Then all of a sudden he took to

money, drink and drugs. Within the space of two weeks he had sold his soul to the devil, and the last I heard of him he was doing time."

The MusicMan hoped that the young man would reform when he came out - but he knew very few did. The MusicMan felt that although the arts are not important in the political world outside, the Jungle Bar always welcomes writers, and painters with open arms. This pleased the MusicMan: for he knew that he could go to the Jungle Bar and talk to anyone about anything. The MusicMan understood the Jungle Bar people, and how they take you on your word. That is until they find you out - then you are forever made fun of.

El Greco watched the MusicMan stare at the Jungle Bar people. Trying to guess what was in his mind, El Greco, in a deep foreign voice, said to him, "Have you found yourself a wife in amongst the Jungle Bar dancers, MusicMan?"

The MusicMan sighed as if knowing the power to bring people together in wedlock lay in the stars, throughout an ever-moving universe. He answered El Greco thoughtfully, "Believe in the Good Lord, and your destiny is secure."

El Greco, dressed as Plato's friend Socrates, took the answer inside him. Then he said to the MusicMan, as if his own philosophy had been challenged, "Surely we can only go by what attracts us to physical objects, by things like: proportion, elegance, beauty, and grace - and these things are in everything."

Doctor High had his own philosophy as far as the opposite sex went. The Doctor with sword in hand had pinned another pretty young thing up against the Jungle Bar. The Doctor took off his funny French hat, and before he kissed the pretty thing, he said majestically, "D'Artagnan, at your service, mam."

This seemed to get the Restaurateur going; for the very same man who drummed in a local band, started knocking bottles about to the beat of the wild Jungle Bar music. As he danced about trying to woo the opposite sex, his chef's hat fell over his left eye, and he lost his way. The happy-go-lucky Restaurateur bumped

into a Jungle Bar waitress, dressed as Jane, "Oh, hello," he said, and naturally gave her a cuddle.

The Money-lovers couldn't dance and clap all night, the same way as the Music-lovers. In fact, Money-lovers, in the Jungle Bar, are always on edge. A good example of this is when King Clown noticed the Music-lovers having fun; feeling out of it he sent the Nodding Horseman over to invite them back to his place. He also told the Nodding Horseman to invite the Queen without a Crown, and a few of her Blow boys and Blow girls, "Round them up Nodding Horseman and bring them back to mine," he instructed him.

So the Nodding Horseman shyly went around the bar nodding to everyone and anyone, saying, "Do you want to go to a party?"

After a nod or two, the Nodding Horseman stood there with his head slightly tilted back, and his right heel against his left instep. Then he casually mentioned to one or two Jungle Bar people, "King Clown is having a party. There will be plenty of booze, there."

When he came across the drunken Restaurateur he noticed the man in the chef's hat was kissing and hugging everyone. The Nodding Horseman put himself forward for a cuddle, and when he got close to him, he joked with him, "Fancy a party, big boy, back at King Clown's place?"

The Restaurateur did not commit himself, but followed the blind drunken party line by saying yes to everything and anything that committed himself to nothing, "No problem, Nodding Horseman."

The Rattler man also went walkabout around the bar, and he tried to dig people up for the late night soiree. He told the Jungle Bar people about how his friend the Clown, who had just bought the Television company, and was not surprised when some Jungle Bar people seemed interested.

A man who had come to the fancy dress party dressed as a Pantaloon, and who sold cars to the Jungle Bar people, chatted to the Rattler man. The Rattler suggested to him that he should

come back to King Clown's place. Then the two men chatted about life, and what was going on in and around the Jungle Bar scene. The Pantaloon agreed with the Rattler man about how to get the best out of people. He said to the Rattler man in a gruff voice, "Yea, that's right, you have to rattle people these days, before you get anything out of them."

Strangely enough towards the end of the night the three Judges started arguing amongst themselves, about who they thought looked the most outrageous character at the fancy dress party.

One of the three Judges said, "It's got to be that man they call King Clown. They say he has just bought the local TV station. Have you not seen the way he acts with the rabble?"

The other two Judges did not agree, and one of them said, "Oh, no I think the most outrageous character at the fancy dress party is the man the Jungle Bar people call Doctor High. Anyone who comes dressed as one of the Three Musketeers has got to be given the prize. *Tous pour un, un pour tous*."

The Judge who had not yet spoken on the subject quietly sat back. After taking a sip of beer, he took on board what the others had just said. Then the Judge, who had not spoken, gave his opinion, "Well, gentlemen, I am going to cast my vote in favour of the man the Jungle Bar people call the MusicMan."

The other two Judges looked surprised, and after looking at each other as if to say who is the MusicMan, they both asked in unison, "Why?"

"Because milords, they say he has written a musical book."

The three Judges cheered and looked over towards the Jungle Bar where the Music-lovers were standing. Then the three Judges all stood up, and saluted the soldier with the broken collarbone.

"Here's to the MusicMan!"

"Yes, to the MusicMan!"

"The MusicMan!"

King Clown for some bizarre reason felt the challenge in the air as to who was top dog at the Jungle Bar. He had heard wrongly that the three Judges had delivered in favour of Doctor High, as

the most outrageous man at the fancy dress party. King Clown told the Nodding Horseman not to invite the Doctor back to his get-together, later on. King Clown in anger cracked a joke, "He is getting too big for his buccaneer boots."

When the party was over the Music-lovers, who were heading back to the south side, finished their drinks, and got ready to leave the fancy dress Jungle party. The MusicMan invited Flower girl and Jujube, back to his friend's restaurant.

Flower girl with a beautiful smile made the decision for both of them, "Sounds wonderful, MusicMan - let's go."

It must have been a strange sight indeed for a taxi driver to witness: two Flamenco dancers, a Greek philosopher, a Chef, and a Second World War hero climb into the back of his taxi cab. Turning round to look at them, the taxi driver wondered to himself, "Is it Halloween, all ready?"

Plato the Greek tried to help him. El Greco, in his deep impressive voice, told him all about the fancy dress Jungle Bar party, "Yes, it was a good night, my friend…"

However, it fell to the MusicMan to tell the driver about what life was really like, outside his window, in the year just before the new millennium, "Listen mate life's a Jungle out there, and to survive it - you have got to be outrageous."

# 13

At exactly two in the morning, the Restaurateur got out of a taxi, and walked to the entrance of his restaurant. He put a key in the door, and as the alarm went off he tottered inside a half-lit room, opened a cabinet, and presently switched off the ringing sound.

The MusicMan and his friends followed him inside and soon everybody was standing in a small room surrounded by tables and chairs, where only two hours ago the rich and middle classes from all over Glasgow had been fed.

The Restaurateur found another light switch. Then he turned on two electric fan heaters, and a cold room that had still some of the atmosphere in it - from the many different characters who had at one time or another been there - came into existence once more.

As he threw the keys on top of the writing desk, the Restaurateur said in an official tone, "Right everyone, help yourselves to drinks at the bar."

The little room where the Restaurateur sat during the day - when it was quiet and the Diamond Dealers were not around - seemed the best place to go. So after everyone had got themselves a drink at the free bar, they all filtered into the little room, that the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur called, the snug.

The owner, who still had his chef's hat on bent down and switched on another fan heater that lay under the table. Then he informed everyone, with a wink and a daft look, that it would be warm soon. He then waddled towards the kitchen to prepare some food for his late night guests.

In the kitchen, the Restaurateur switched on the gas oven, and muttered to himself, "Well, at least I'm dressed for the part tonight."

Back at the snug Jujube lit a cigarette, and as she blew the smoke out into the cold night air she invited conversation, by saying, "I couldn't believe some of the outfits tonight at the Jungle Bar fancy dress party, could you?"

Flower girl agreed with her, and as she reflected she nodded and said, "Yes, some of them were quite fantastic - weren't they."

Jujube laughed, as if seeing the exact same picture as Flower girl, and after looking at the scene once again, she cried, "I didn't think Splash was a Sugarplum fairy - though did you?"

Everyone laughed and a discussion followed as regards how some of the Jungle Bar characters liked to portray themselves, and how others actually see them, in and around the Jungle Bar scene.

Jujube continued, "However, I wasn't surprised when I saw what the Money-lovers were dressed up as - were you?"

This seemed to lead the conversation eventually into a discussion about how people get their nickname from the Jungle Bar people. El Greco, with one eye on Jujube and the other on his worldly philosophy, wondered, "This is very interesting, how we see ourselves, and how others see us can end up two different things. And I feel we could spend our whole lives watching shadows on the wall, not knowing what or who we are…"

El Greco, I think, was just about to launch into a speech about the individual, the state, and how freedom can be the death of society, if the state does not control all its subjects. However, just at that moment, the Restaurateur placed a hot plate of rice and chilli in front of El Greco. The political man from Greece forgot all about what he was going to say, and cried out, "Oh, Mr Restaurateur - this is too much."

The happy-go-lucky Restaurateur had never read Plato, but he too had a philosophy of his own: "House rules are - eat don't talk," he said with a daft grin.

El Greco laughed and tucked into the food. As the Restaurateur sat down he lifted up his glass of wine, and gave a tipsy toast: "May this be the worst of our days."

The Music-lovers loved nothing better than to sit together late into the night, and talk about life and all its complexities. Their discussion usually started with politics, followed by religion, and for some reason after this their thoughts always drifted into who was what at the Jungle Bar, and then they talked about sex.

Glasgow, being a city torn between Luther and Rome, usually makes its inhabitants fall one way or the other as far as religion goes, but the Restaurateur did not follow suit. Sitting on the holy fence, he said in a harsh tone, "It's all a bundle of shit, if you ask me."

Jujube and Flower girl laughed at the drunken Restaurateur. They had never seen him like this before.

The debate got going, and moved quickly into the political arena. El Greco felt that Scotland would be better off in Europe - rather than out of it. As he watched his friend, the Restaurateur, fill his boots with wine, El Greco suggested in his deep academic voice, "Federalism, I feel is the way your country should go."

The wild Restaurateur now agreed with anything that was not the norm. He stared at his guests as if the world was now a better place without states, rules, or kingdoms. After a few moments the Restaurateur shouted, "Yea, let's leave these English bastards behind!"

His friend the MusicMan knew that he was too far gone to make much sense, and he laughed as he reminded him, "Your mother is English."

On a serious note, the MusicMan told his friends, "I believe a kingdom divided is on its way to rack and ruin. Scotland would become like Ireland, if that were the case, with its people wandering between Brussels, Rome and Regina. At least at the moment we know who governs us."

The warning fell, however, on drunken ears, and El Greco spoke about what he thought was the best political way forward for Scotland.

The Restaurateur got up off his seat, and bent over and planted a wet kiss on the bald head of the man who loved politics. The Restaurateur said to him, "Politics is a fool's game." The Restaurateur sat down and, as he made a mad face at everyone, he added in a profane tone, "I tell you, it's a ball of shit."

The MusicMan laughed, but he noticed that even though the two of them had quite a lot to drink, they never took their eyes of Flower girl and Jujube.

Presently, El Greco and the Restaurateur both tried to charm the young Jungle Bar ladies with the greatest gift known to seducers, namely enmity.

A little later on in the small hours of the morning, El Greco put forward a twenty-first century plan for the people of Europe, "In my view it will be a state within many countries. There will be no differences in any of its policies. There will be free movement to get from one part of the country to the next, without any state borders: in short many nations under one flag, with local governments running local affairs. And Brussels lord and master of policy, implementation, and procedures."

The MusicMan thought the road to Brussels a nefarious one. He replied with a well-known quotation: "ECU is the coin from hell."

As the MusicMan listened to the discussion it seemed to him that this debate would not go away during his lifetime. After a few more bottles of the house red, the MusicMan noticed his dear friend the Restaurateur preoccupied, he seemed to stare faraway as if into an unknown world of uncertainty. The man of music had heard just recently, from a customer who goes to the restaurant that the Diamond Dealers had left the Restaurateur high and dry: in short they had taken him for a mug.

The MusicMan gently brought the topic to the surface, "They were funny these two who used to sit in here, during the day, and sell diamonds over the telephone."

The Restaurateur nodded and before he answered his friend, he lit a cigarette. Then he said in an angry tone, "They sat in here, and had all the waitresses running after them, night and day. I let them use the office phone, and they ran up a huge bill, and then they do a runner."

The Restaurateur tried to face up to the world of unpredictability, but he soon found himself opening another bottle of wine and cursing the Diamond Duo.

Flower girl sighed and said something about hoping that they would reform before it was too late. Jujube had never met the Diamond Dealers, but she had met their type, and she said with a look of contempt on her angry beautiful face, "A curse on all Money-lovers."

Hearing the bad news El Greco, for a moment, took his eye of one of the girls. He said profoundly, "Listen, Mr Restaurateur, I have no time for Money-lovers no matter what country they come from; but I am sure Socrates would have told you that no harm can come to a good man during his lifetime - or after it - because injustice harms the doer and justice helps the good man."

As soon as his soul had taken in the spoken words from the Greek man, the Restaurateur got off his seat and hugged El Greco. With laughter dancing in his light brown eyes, the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur said, "I tell you, Socrates, must have been some man, all right."

The MusicMan had read Plato many years ago, and although he did not want to spoil the illusion. He thought he had better tell his friend, the Restaurateur, something about the life of Socrates, "Yes, and the Greeks put him to death on a drummed up charge of corrupting the young."

The not so happy-go-lucky Restaurateur looked at El Greco to see if this was true. Seeing that it was true, the Restaurateur sat back down on his seat and threw his hands up in the air, and cried, "See, I told you, it is all a bundle of shit."

Flower girl and Jujube laughed. The MusicMan walked out of the little snug and changed the music on the tape machine.

Presently everyone started dancing and singing; after about an hour the Music-lovers all sat back down and started talking again.

Everyone knew that popular capitalism had reached its peak in the nineteen nineties. Many people had turned away from being helpful. A money craze had come about, through stocks and shares, it had made money people modish, and not care about those out of work, or for those who had no homes.

El Greco felt uneasy about this, but thought it could be explained by plain old history: "You must understand, money is spread around in different ways, at different times. Sometimes the rich have too much; if the rich, however, do not invest in the right things, this can cause a revolution. On the other hand, when the lower and middle classes have more than enough money, they buy up everything in sight. When the demand is greater than the supply, then this can cause inflation. And when the workers in the modern world feel confident and in charge of their own destiny, and there is not enough skilled labour around, then you will usually find more strikes for more pay and better conditions. But in my opinion popular capitalism today is nothing more than a fashion. For example, the priorities in the nineteen nineties are for big houses and expensive cars. People you see want to show that they are part of the ruling culture - the popular nineties money culture. This is why money has become king, and this has caused not only a divided society, but also a divided culture between those who have and those who have not. The have-nots saying that money is the root of all evil and all that, and the other lot saying money is everything. There is nothing unusual in this. In fact, this has been happening since the beginning of time. I am afraid Scotland is no different from any other part of the world - even if the people here tell you they believe in socialism."

The MusicMan wondered if El Greco was right, but he did not get too serious about it. He said to him, "Well, I know people like cars all right. Last week, they had a church service for them, in a town where cars have been produced for many years."

Jujube had seen this on TV, and she laughed, then cried, "Unbelievable."

El Greco slightly embarrassed tried to get his own back on the MusicMan, he said: "Well, MusicMan, if you don't like the system then why are you about to enter into negotiations with the Money-lovers who go to the Jungle Bar?"

The MusicMan understood the question: "Because I'm afraid, El Greco, no one else is interested in me. I'm caught it seems between the devil in the market place, and the deep blue sea of the dole queue."

His friends he could see were a little sceptical. After taking a sip of wine, he added," You must understand Glasgow, or for that matter Scotland, is at the end of the universe as far as the arts go."

Flower girl and Jujube knew that there was little help given to artists in the money mad days just before the millennium, and both backed him up.

Jujube told El Greco straight, "Yea, that's right, the MusicMan has no option but to go to the market place with his musical novel; and God help him if they are all like the Money-loving bunch who go to the Jungle Bar."

The MusicMan kissed Jujube for saying that. Then the actor inside the MusicMan spoke, "It seems to me my friends that I must trust a snake, before a harlot, and a harlot, before a Money-lover."

Flower girl, who only spoke about good and beautiful things in life, could see that everyone was starting to get a bit too serious about things. With a kind look towards heaven, she sighed, "I remember when people took an interest in everyday things, and money was hardly ever mentioned. I hope these days come back again."

The MusicMan looked at his friend Flower girl, and as he picked up his glass of wine from the table, he said, "I hope so, Flower girl, for we are living in a mongrel time, where they chant: Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

As the Restaurateur poured everyone some more wine, thankfully the horrible money topic disappeared. Then love talk strayed from the Restaurateur's lips. Feeling that he held the world in his hands the Restaurateur proudly boasted, "Love making

makes the world go round - that's what life is all about, my friends."

Looking at Jujube, El Greco agreed, "Yes, this is true, boy love, man love, woman and man love, it is all the same thing."

Smiling at Flower girl the MusicMan protested, "It's all Greek to me."

Flower girl laughed and watched El Greco put his arm around Jujube. El Greco started to go to work on the sweet and pretty thing, and Flower girl stared at Jujube, as if wondering about love and all its many wonderful ways. With big eyes that looked out onto a plain and simple world, Flower girl said a little prayer to herself, "Love is like a flower, gentle, sweet, attractive, and serene."

14

The following Monday, the MusicMan had a meeting with the Money-lovers in their city centre office at 2 p.m. On the train on the way into town the MusicMan to relax sat by the window, and watched all the changing colours from faraway places. However, as the city got closer he couldn't help but wonder, "What in the world can I do. I know I can't trust the Money-lovers. I know I won't get a penny from them - but I must get my musical book out."

As the MusicMan glanced around the carriage at the faces, sitting here and there, a strange thought crossed his mind about how artists, and their projects, come to light in society: "There is always controversy of some sort or another, when a book comes out, isn't there?"

When he thought about all the different grant schemes he had applied for, the MusicMan laughed. He also remembered what the Business Start up agency, attached to the Unemployment Centre, had said to him in a letter: "Here is a list of people, who are interested in music, in the city - good luck."

When the MusicMan tried to contact the names on the list he found half of them to be dead, and the other half to be too old to help. Laughing again to himself, he reflected, "Such is life in the boom and bust days of the British economy."

The MusicMan couldn't be bothered to read the broadsheet newspaper that he had bought at the corner shop; instead he started to write musical notes in the margin. As he whistled the notes back to himself he dedicated the tune to all the passengers on the train who believed in the golden light of truth.

As the MusicMan walked down the stairs at Central station a beggar put his cap out, and told him that he would take American Express. When the beggar looked at the MusicMan he winked at him, and admitted, "Well, son, you have got to follow the trends in life."

The MusicMan smiled and hoped that the spirit of survival inside the beggar man would see him through, and from his coat pocket he gave him a coin. The beggar watched the coin fall into his hat, and the joy of silver - that could buy him something - made him shout, "God bless you, son."

Presently, the MusicMan headed across the busy morning streets, and went in search of the Money-lovers building. He knew they had an office inside the television centre, in the heart of the city. This time he knew where to go, and when he found the building he stopped and looked up at the huge complex in front of him. Then he walked up a little flight of stairs and went inside.

The commissionaire held the telephone to his ear with his shoulder: for he had a false hand, and was writing with the other one. The nice man soon came off the telephone and laughed about people who he said had strange wants and needs. Then he smiled at the MusicMan, before lamenting, "It's another one of those days, son."

The MusicMan told him that he had an appointment with the man commonly known as the Gorilla. With a knowing look on his face the commissionaire instructed him, "You know where to go son - downstairs and it's the first door on your left."

Having been there before the MusicMan walked down the stairs confidently, and at the bottom of the stairs he opened the door and once again looked around at the many modern offices, here and there, all boxed inside glass. Right in front of him, under a half pulled down Venetian blind, he could see the same group of

men in conference. The MusicMan looked to his left, through a plastic plant near the door, and heard the voice of the Gorilla man shouting at someone inside his office.

The MusicMan thought to himself, "I have only been here twice, and it's the same old scene."

Suddenly, as he stared at the door, it opened and out came a young lad with short black hair. The Gorilla man appeared behind him, shouting, "You'll never work for me again - you're finished!"

This time the MusicMan knew the routine, and he watched as the young man turned round and shouted at the Gorilla, "Die yah Money-loving hothead!"

When the young man walked by the MusicMan, the Gorilla stared at him. After looking at the floor the MusicMan thought about the man who had been thrown out of the Gorilla's office the last time he had been here. He remembered his wonderful voice: 'There is more dignity on the dole son - than working for a Money-loving galoot like him.'

Before he looked up, the MusicMan remembered the phrase he had made up at the Restaurateur's place the other night: "Trust a snake before a harlot, and a harlot before a Money-lover."

No coins, this time, were scattered at the Gorilla's feet, and the MusicMan wondered, "Maybe the young man has still to learn how to deal with Money-lovers."

The Gorilla turned round and just before going back into his office, he looked at the architects, over to his right, as if to tell them that their fifty seconds of theatre was over: "Yes, you can all go back to work now!" he shouted, then walked back into his office.

The MusicMan felt like laughing; for the Gorilla's face looked shocked, and he wondered if he should wait a minute, or two, before going in. The MusicMan found himself staring at the cheap industrial carpet till a few minutes had past, then he walked into the Gorilla's office.

Inside his office, the Gorilla once more howled at the unfair creative spirit that brought men to his door, in search of fortune

and fame, "You get them fixed up with television deals - and that's the thanks you get for it."

The man of music couldn't help but wonder what the young man did for a living, "Maybe he's a script writer, or something like that - I'd better not ask."

The MusicMan, as he waited for the Gorilla to calm down, listened to the cool music being played inside the office. Once or twice, he slowly glanced over at the two secretaries. The office was small and compact and had all the latest technology: a computer, a fax, etc.

After a few minutes the MusicMan smiled, and he said casually, "It's getting a bit cold for August - don't you think."

A secretary looked up. She looked surprised. It was as if natural words were not things easily spoken in the nineteen nineties. Sitting down the MusicMan looked up at a white writing board that had all kinds of dates and names written on it. He noticed the name: 'the MusicMan,' and some words beside it: 'the man who has written a musical book.'

The MusicMan also noticed that King Clown had not arrived yet. He waited patiently to speak to the Gorilla. Suddenly, the telephones started ringing. One of the secretaries, after she had picked up a ringing telephone, said nonchalantly, "That's Mr Lickspittle on line two for you," and the office seemed to come alive, and settle down again.

The Gorilla exploded, "You tell him from me that if he is not in my office by tomorrow - he won't be getting any money!" and a roar of laughter strangely followed this outburst.

The two young secretaries, who worked for him, tried to soothe the Gorilla's bad temper with light chitchat about famous people who they thought were high in the ratings at the moment.

So to kill time, the MusicMan picked up a pen and copied the melody down, onto a piece of paper, from the song playing on the tape inside the office. Then for some reason he remembered, once more, what the man had said to him about the ways of Money-lovers: 'There is more dignity on the dole son - than working for a Money-loving galoot like him.'

He noticed that the Gorilla man liked to put people down, who he thought were on their way down. However, when he heard a name mentioned, by one of the secretaries - whom society thought was on the way up - he would smile as if he were about to follow that person up the social ladder. In the space of a minute the Gorilla had stated, "It serves him right, he should have listened to me," and then, "yea, he's doing well - he'll make plenty of money - you see he listened to me."

The MusicMan thought, "It seems everyone in life has to be judged, these days, by their cash flow: if they have a lot coming in - they are doing all right; if they have a lot going out, and not so much coming in - they are dismissed as irrelevant."

The Money-lovers took over all sorts of businesses. They would buy them up cheaply, make a pile, then move on. A strange immoral atmosphere, the MusicMan felt, circulated around the Money-lovers office. This mood he noticed did not change no matter what news the incoming calls brought.

Glancing at the old church outside, through the basement window, the MusicMan wondered to himself, "What is it that creeps in at windows and makes people bow down to money, its gods, and its many uses?"

At 3 p.m. the clock on the wall made no sound as the minute hand steadfastly made its way round once more. Suddenly, the door opened and into the publicity office of the local TV station, where the Money-lovers had their headquarters, marched the man who the people of the Jungle Bar call King Clown.

"Buckets of rain!" he shouted.

The two secretaries laughed when he said this. After throwing down a bundle of papers onto a desk, just inside the door, King Clown flapped his famous foot. Then he shouted, "And how are we today ladies, feeling well!"

Apparently, the Clown, who has just recently bought the local TV station, spotted the thin face of the young secretary who worked for the Gorilla man, in a pub last night. The young secretary stared at him - half in fear and half in joy.

King Clown said in a strange uncomfortable voice, "Yes, I saw you last night kissing that young man." As everyone laughed, King Clown murmured, "Don't you know strong drink and strong men will lead you astray, young lady?"

King Clown rarely looked at anyone when he was speaking to them, although he seemed to have them constantly under his spell. The people who went to the Jungle Bar said that after his brain had received an impression of any scene, it only took a few seconds to work out how much money could be made, and of course if none could, he would move on. Here is a well-known King Clown quotation: "Find out what money vices they have, move in on them, and take them over."

A few interesting words from the Gorilla man, with a few interesting people on the telephone seemed to impress King Clown. The man the Jungle Bar people call King Clown presently slapped the Gorilla man on the back several times, and told him, "Good man, Gorilla, keep the money coming in - I know I can count on you."

When he finally sat down, he looked pleased with himself, and as he stared at the secretary with the thin face, he said in a strange voice, "I always look forward to the once a week Money-lovers meeting - you know," then he laughed.

However, as soon as he was happy he looked sad again. King Clown wanted to know the whereabouts of the Nodding Horseman, for he had not arrived yet. The meeting started with the MusicMan hardly being noticed. King Clown started speaking about an entertainment centre that had just come onto the market. He asked the Gorilla man what he thought its real value was. Just as they were discussing the enterprise, in came the Nodding Horseman, nodding like the devil, and lamenting in a sing-song voice, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm late, I'm late. My car broke down on the south side of the city, and I had to push it all the way into town."

When the Nodding Horseman looked down at his short raincoat, he stared at the rain still on it, then nodded at the

evidence. King Clown laughed and told him to sit down, and the meeting duly got under way again.

A few moments later, King Clown said, "Right, MusicMan, we like the idea of the musical book, and we would like to get involved with it. We will, of course, be seeking the backing from some of our friends in the city."

At this point, King Clown looked over to his right to where the MusicMan was sitting. He stared at him like a child. Then he added in a daft voice, "We have some very interesting money friends in the city, you know, Mr MusicMan."

After laughing at his own words, King Clown signalled to one of the secretaries to answer the incoming call, but to say to the caller that he was out. Then he continued, "I met Oz in London many years ago, when we worked together on network TV; and I hear from some of my money mad friends in the city that he has just bought himself a big publishing house. The Money-lovers therefore would like you, Mr MusicMan, to accompany us to the capital to see Mr Oz."

Just then, the Gorilla man butted in with some provisos, "But there will be no contract, no agreement, and no advance."

The Nodding Horseman nodded at the MusicMan that this was the way of the modern world, for Money-lovers, in the nineteen nineties. King Clown at this moment paused, and waited for the MusicMan to agree to a career that had no rights.

The MusicMan smiled. He knew the game he had to play, "Yes, of course, I understand."

A few more words in between a few more thoughts seemed to draw the bizarre meeting to a close. The MusicMan lifted the scrap of paper that he had copied the tune onto. As he put it into his coat pocket, he thought to himself, "It doesn't take long to become involved with Money-lovers - does it."

The MusicMan couldn't help but wonder about the man named Oz, "He seems to be a financial wizard who can produce money anytime he wants to - maybe he owns a bank?"

The two secretaries smiled at the MusicMan, as if he were the luckiest man on earth. Then the two of them seemed to drift

back into a happy and sad oppressive way of life working for a Gorilla, a Nodding Horseman, and a King who was a Clown.

No one shook hands and when the meeting seemed to be officially over, King Clown just teased the thin faced secretary again, "Going out for another drink tonight, are we?"

When he got back onto the street the MusicMan started to think seriously about the place of the musician in the modern world. He knew that some sort of deal now existed between the Money-lovers and himself. The MusicMan made a promise that whatever happened he would not bow down to their money ways. He would keep his eye on his music. To do this he worked out a philosophy, that he thought would help him, "Be pessimistic, MusicMan. The world is an evil place where people constantly try to bring you down. Never lose sight of your objectives. Let them worry about, money, fame, and all that is worthless."

Not far from Central station the MusicMan started to feel a bit better. A man's face, passing by in the crowd under a colourful umbrella, reminded him of a government official he had once met in Edinburgh. The official had told him, "It is not the function of government in the nineties to help, or fund, the individual with his little music project. We mandarins, you must understand, just tinker with the system for the politicians. In these money mad days just before the millennium, I am sorry to say, music is not an issue. Go to the market place, Mr MusicMan, and the best of luck to you."

Just before the MusicMan walked up the stairs and into the enclosed space of an international train station, he looked up at the tall buildings, on both sides of Union Street, till his eye seemed to fix on the row of squat Egyptian columns, built by Alexander Thomson. The MusicMan wondered to himself, "Is it possible that all economic and political systems become corrupted, and are eventually brought down because of this."

The MusicMan watched all the people coming and going in and out of the station and, before he had reached the top of the stairs, he said to himself, "The idea of change, and how it comes about is a fascinating thing. No date is fixed; it must come in the

wind. The French revolution did not start on a set date and end on one. This money mad culture, full of cars, full of corruption, and of new technology that puts people out of work, and makes the rich richer, will eventually pass away. One day something else will take its place."

# 15

The next day as soon as the MusicMan got up the telephone rang. Wondering who it could be on the end of the other line, he picked the receiver up in the hallway, and said in a sleepy voice, "Hello."

The secretary from King Clown's office gave him instructions, "MusicMan, you have to be at the airport in half-an-hour. You are going to see Mr Oz, today."

The MusicMan, after grabbing some things together and putting them into a small bag, took a taxi to the airport where he spotted the Gorilla outside the main terminal building.

The Gorilla man yawned when he saw the taxi pull up, and he greeted him in a tired voice, "Ah, MusicMan."

Just then, another taxi pulled up at the rank behind him, and out jumped King Clown. Looking at the MusicMan, he hollered "Good morning, big man, how are you this morning?"

The MusicMan thought the 'big man' a strange phrase to use - even from the mouth of a Clown. The saying popularised by a local foulmouthed comedian had become a familiar gesture used by the middle classes to mock the working classes. However, knowing that whatever it is in a popular phrase that people like, will no doubt change in the near future, the MusicMan replied, "Yes, it's a lovely morning with bright sunshine, and blue skies above."

Presently, the Nodding Horseman appeared, out of a taxi, and then a quick chant took place of: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

Then King Clown picked up his big black bag, and headed for the check-in desk. The young check-in lady, who looked half-asleep, looked up, and saw the mad happy face of King Clown in front of her. As she watched one dark eye wink at her, she heard the man behind him say to someone, "You should have seen King Clown last night - down at the Metro Club - he was outrageous."

With great excitement the Money-lovers held a morning conference, away from the MusicMan, to see who was going to purchase the flight tickets. The Gorilla picked the short straw, and paid for the tickets, then they all headed up the stairs towards the departure lounge. An hour later high in the sky an attractive stewardess gave out morning papers to the passengers. When it came to the Clown's turn he thanked her, and took a paper from her. After ordering bacon and eggs for everyone on the aircraft, he complimented her on her looks, and on her ability to stand still while the plane was moving through the air. Then he asked her out.

The MusicMan, who had the window seat next to him on the plane, noticed that when the young lady blushed the Clown's foot flapped under the seat in front of him.

Professionalism got the poor thing through the ordeal. As she walked away, King Clown shouted after her, "I will send flowers to the airport for you, every day, for the rest of your life."

Turning to the Nodding Horseman, who sat on his left, King Clown said calmly, "I think women look better when they are up in the air don't you?"

The Nodding Horseman loved this nonsense, he nodded in agreement, and shouted over to the MusicMan, "King Clown can pull the birds out of the sky, as well as out of the Metro Club," and they all laughed.

Two hours later the MusicMan got out of a London taxi and walked towards a hotel. As he walked he wondered what sort of

reception they would get, "I mean to say, they are no ordinary bunch, this lot, are they."

An attractive Japanese-London lady greeted them inside the grand Park Hotel Knightsbridge. She said in a soft polite voice, "I hope you have had a nice flight, gentlemen," and gave them all a golden smile. Then after checking the register, she added, "The porter will be here in a minute, or two, to uplift your cases."

The MusicMan had been to London before. The first time he had visited the capital was with his father many years ago. He remembered going to Ascot races and backing the winner of the Royal Hunt Cup, and with the money he had bought a colourful belt in a shop of Carnaby Street. He also remembered they had visited the Palace, the parliament, and Madame Tussaud's.

It soon became apparent that the Money-lovers from Glasgow travelled up and down to London just about every other week, and they loved the place. In the reception area, the Nodding Horseman started to become excited. After he had dropped his bags down on the thick pile carpet, he danced on the spot and told everyone within earshot, "This is my favourite hotel in London."

Just as the MusicMan was wondering how many hotel beds the Nodding Horseman's nodding head had laid down on, a cockney porter came out of a side room. When the porter saw King Clown standing in the middle of the reception area, he smiled, then cried, "Well, if it's not King of Clown, down in London town, then I'm a Japanese wrestler."

The London-Japanese manageress laughed, and watched the porter greet King Clown with a hug. Feeling that they would have talked all day, she interrupted King Clown. She said in a quiet professional foreign voice, "Oh, excuse me, I have two double rooms booked, but I have no names for them."

King Clown quickly organised things, "I will share with the MusicMan, and the Gorilla man will share with the Nodding Horseman."

No nod came from the head of the Nodding Horseman when he heard King Clown say this. Before signing his name in the hotel register King Clown telephoned the office of Oz, from one of the

booths in the foyer. After speaking to his secretary, he shouted over to the others, "Oz will be along shortly!"

The Nodding Horseman jumped into the air when he heard King Clown mention the magic name of Oz, and he ran over to the telephone booth. When he got there he jumped into the air again, though this time he bumped his nodding head off the top of the booth, and he could hardly speak to Oz when King Clown eventually handed him the telephone.

Presently, the two men walked back over towards the reception area, and King Clown laughed, and flapped his foot three times. Turning to the Nodding Horseman, he said, "One for London, two for gold, and three for the MusicMan's story to be told," then he laughed again.

About four o'clock the three Money-lovers, and the MusicMan, met downstairs at the hotel bar. Opposite the Nodding Horseman, King Clown sat down in one of the four easy chairs in front of the cosy lounge bar. There the Clown read the London evening paper. Next to him the Gorilla man hummed a popular American tune, and seemed to fall into a reverie, as if he was sitting at home. Sometimes the Gorilla man would smile to himself and say, "Hum," and fold his arms.

The Nodding Horseman, still full of excitement from being in the capital, started talking to the MusicMan about the last time he had been to London with Oz. He said reverently, "Oz took us to the Helter-Skelter Club - that's where all the big stars hang-out. He introduced us to all the stars, and the crazy people who trip the light fantastic."

From the London street a thin figure arrived, as if part of a play or cosmic plan, and stood at the little hotel bar. The man looked over at the small group of people seated in front of him. King Clown looked up from the business section of his newspaper, and when he saw who it was that was standing at the bar, he got up and shook hands with him, "Oz, how are you?"

A picture of a London spiv that the MusicMan had imagined before he had come to the capital suddenly came to life in front of his very eyes. Oz looked unwashed and somewhat slightly spaced

out. His medium black hair was wet and brushed back. His skin looked blanched even under the colourful surroundings of the bar, and his eyes looked tired and old for a man in his mid-thirties. Oz reminded the MusicMan of someone everyone hated at school.

Oz completely ignored the MusicMan at first, and after laughing at the Nodding Horseman - who was starting to dance about on the spot - he said, as if in jest, in a cockney accent, "So this is the man who has written a musical novel, and is going to make us all a fortune."

The Nodding Horseman not only nodded to this statement, but he tried out his London accent, "That's right guv."

As everyone laughed, the Nodding Horseman thought it a good time to start singing, "Money we want, money we crave…"

Oz did not know the song, and he looked at him wondering what he was up to. The Gorilla man sensing the mood elbowed the Nodding Horseman in the ribs. After a grin the Gorilla muttered to Oz the reason behind the madness, "It's our party song," he said shyly.

King Clown then gave a little speech about how well his television company was doing at the moment. Then he started to praise Oz, by telling everyone around him, "Yes, there's no one like Oz in the whole of London for making money."

Yes, it was true everything at that moment seemed bigger and better than at any other time before, for the man who worked in publishing in London. Oz really became excited when he told the Money-lovers: "Listen, I've just got hold of the rights of a dead American author," and after cackling, he added, "he wasn't famous when he was alive, but I will see to it that he becomes famous now that he is dead."

There was certainly nothing better than making money in life, and if the poor chap had died a pauper - then so what. Oz had a simple philosophy: make money, money, money, that's the name of the game.

Just before sitting down, Oz lit a long filtered cigarette and as he blew the smoke out of his mouth, he reflected for a moment.

Then he turned to the Nodding Horseman, and in a smart cockney accent he asked him,"How does that song go again?"

And the theme of the nineties was duly chanted once more: "Money we want, money we crave…"

The MusicMan sat down with them, and for a time he said very little. He watched the Japanese-London manageress come and go into the small bar, and organise some drinks for some newly arrived customers, who were sitting in the reception area. However, he couldn't help but listen to the mad capitalist drum beat talk that was going on all around him. The MusicMan was struck by the way north and south of the country had no divide when it came to pennies and pounds, "I've got this. I want to get that. My company is trading overseas. I am going to invest in this. I'm going to sell my shares. I'm going to buy another restaurant. I want to buy another hotel and another pub. Who has just bought what? Sell it. No, buy it. No, keep a hold of it. Sell it first, then buy it. That should make a good profit. That should make a fast buck…"

At times, the MusicMan had to remind himself about this mad story, "Just play your part, MusicMan, and get your musical book out so that the good people can read it. Leave the money men to go to money hell."

Oz laughed when the Gorilla man told him about a friend of his who had made millions of pounds selling songs to young people, "They all want to be stars. He sends them the music through the post, and they sing along to it."

The Gorilla stood up and when he had finished laughing he asked everyone, in a loud voice, "What do you want to drink?"

Oz surprised the company by saying in a cool voice, "No, I'm not drinking alcohol these days. Get me a pineapple juice, thanks."

The Nodding Horseman, who had been nodding non-stop since the arrival of the London financial wizard, ordered a drink. Then when he got the chance he asked his mentor, in a calm, but excited way, "Oz, have you brought your pink Cadillac with you?"

Oz lit another cool cigarette and, as he flicked a match into a large glass ashtray in front of him, he rejoined, “Right outside the door, Nodding Horseman.”

The wizard of London smiled at him, as if understanding the boy inside the Nodding Horseman. After another cool puff on his cigarette, Oz threw the keys at him, “Right outside the door, Nodding Horseman,” he repeated proudly.

The Nodding Horseman caught the keys and before he could nod again, he was outside the hotel shouting the word that everyone seemed to be using in the days just before the year two thousand, “Brilliant! Oz! Brilliant!”

The way the Nodding Horseman ran outside the hotel for some reason worried Oz. Putting his hand up to his mouth, he shouted after him, “I’ve got to be back at the office in twenty minutes to take that telephone call about that dead American author - so don’t be long.”

Sitting in the Park Hotel lounge, Oz tried to get some idea about the man his company was about to invest in. Full of pretence he brushed some dust off his suit trousers, and asked the MusicMan, “How’s your broken collarbone?”

The MusicMan had taken the sling off that morning and although still a bit stiff and sore, he replied with a smile, “Oh, fine thanks. I should be back playing the piano and the guitar by the end of the week.”

The MusicMan’s accident made King Clown remember an incident that happened, many years ago, in television: “We were doing this scene about a climber, when the cameraman fell fifty feet to his death.”

After whistling the decent, King Clown thumped the table and, after looking at the faces around him, he laughed at the way some men meet their death. The MusicMan felt that King Clown had a story for every occasion, and he just smiled at him.

The Nodding Horseman did not take long to go round London and, when he ran back into the hotel, he shouted from a distances so that everyone could hear him, “That’s some car

you've got Oz. You should have seen the people stare at me as I went by them."

King Clown turned his head round and looked over the high backed chair, and replied comically, "I hope you nodded at them all," and everyone laughed.

The Nodding Horseman sat down and then got up again: for he was so excited. The Gorilla man wondered aloud if he would be fit enough for the Helter-Skelter Club that night.

When the Nodding Horseman asked if the place was still number one with the fashionable creatures in town, King Clown had a worried look on his face. King Clown turned to the Gorilla, and said in a slick tone, "Yes, the Helter-Skelter is a bit over the top. We will need to keep an eye on the Nodding Horseman, tonight."

Presently, the financial wizard picked up his car keys from the table, and after he finished his pineapple juice he winked at King Clown. Then he said in a racy tone, "I'll pick you up at seven - don't be late now."

Seeing that there was nothing much they could organise so late in the day, the three Money-lovers and the MusicMan had another drink at the hotel bar. And before the three Money-lovers, and the MusicMan, went upstairs to their rooms, King Clown told them what he planned to wear to the Helter-Skelter that night, "Yes, I think I will go in my little tight fitting black French suit, a frilly white shirt, and I will plaster my hair down with gel."

The barman - who funny enough came from Scotland - walked by at this moment, and he looked down at the group of men sitting around the table in front of the bar. As he picked up an empty beer tumbler from the table, he said in a broad Glaswegian accent, "Yea, you'll be all right son - anything goes in London."

# 16

King Clown sat in the front seat beside Oz, and when all the doors were shut, the pink Cadillac's engine was switched on and, as the engine revved up, the Clown shouted, "To the Helter-Skelter Club, my good man!"

Sitting in the back seat of the car the Nodding Horseman thought he could be whimsical too. As the fast car negotiated the night-time capital streets, he nodded and, as he put a sweet in his mouth, the Nodding Horseman told the MusicMan in a friendly tone, "I go mental in London - you know - suck in menthol."

The MusicMan did not know this, but the Gorilla man - who was also in the back seat - did. The Gorilla man said, "Yea, that's right, MusicMan, he doesn't drink at home, but when he crosses the border something happens to him. He goes off his head - must be something in the air."

The Gorilla man laughed and, as he stared at the MusicMan with small farcical eyes, he said something about how fantastic it all was. Then he added with a twinkle in his eye, "In fact, the last time we were down here, he dragged me to every nightclub from Piccadilly Circus to the Edgware Road."

At this point, King Clown interrupted the Gorilla man to say, "Yes, and the two of them never spoke to each other for about a mouth after that."

Still looking at the MusicMan the Gorilla smiled and winked, "Yea, we will need to keep an eye on the Nodding Horseman, tonight."

When the pink Cadillac stopped outside a derelict building somewhere in the West End of London, the MusicMan looked at his watch, and thought to himself, "Look how dark it is for a summer's night. I wonder if he has got lost?"

Just at that moment, Oz switched off the engine, and spoke in a mocking voice, "Right boys and girls, that's it - let's go."

Outside in the dark empty street they walked across the road till they got halfway down an alleyway, and there Oz knocked on a blank door. After a few minutes some sounds came from behind the door. Then a burly man who had a fat face, and close cropped ginger beard, looked through a hatch. The man said in a gruff voice, "Yea, who is it?"

Oz looked up and in a cool business voice replied, "It's Mr Oz, with some friends from Glasgow."

Not long after this the door opened and a yellow light came across the dark alleyway, and made a rectangle right across the street. Presently three short fat bouncers in black suits walked out, and looked up and down the lane. The bouncer with the gruff voice checked a list of names he had on a sheet of paper. After looking at the list for a few seconds, he spoke, "Right, that's fine."

In the three or four minutes that they had stood outside the Helter-Skelter Club, the MusicMan noticed that a small crowd of people had gathered round them. Walking inside the club Oz whispered to the MusicMan, "It's only the rich and famous who get in here."

On the way downstairs to a basement section to where the club lay, a man coming up the stairs looked at the MusicMan and, seeing his ordinary everyday appearance, stopped him. He repeated in a polite posh voice what was in his mind, "You must be well known to get in here."

The MusicMan smiled and, after asking him what the club was like, he told the stranger that the chap behind him was a regular, "I'm only a day tripper."

When they got down the stairs the MusicMan looked across the colourful empty rainbow dance floor, at the flashing squares, that went all the way up to the bar and back down again. When he came across one or two faces, standing here and there around the club, he wondered to himself why they looked so unhappy. The MusicMan laughed to himself. "I know it's a social crime to go out every night in Glasgow, but this lot here look as if it's a crime to be happy."

A beautiful blonde in a leopard skintight outfit lifted a rope and invited Oz to sit at a special table near the bar. After a little speech about what they could order in the way of cocktails, she pirouetted. Then she came close up to the MusicMan and greeted him, "Welcome sir to the Helter-Skelter, I hope your stay is a pleasant one."

King Clown had for some reason fallen behind. However, within a couple of minutes his voice was heard; he came spinning across the dance floor, flapping his famous foot and shouting something about London being full of foreigners, and life being colourful and square.

Oz thought he had better explain to the beautiful hostess, who the madman was coming across the dance floor towards them, "He has just bought the local TV station up north."

The hostess smiled as if she knew they would get on well together. Then she saw the face of the Nodding Horseman nod at her. A few minutes later the Nodding Horseman told her, "He's the richest man north of the border, you know."

For the big night out in London the Nodding Horseman had put on a black leather jacket and black leather trousers, and he wore shades. Staring at him, the MusicMan thought him a spy.

On arrival over to where they were standing King Clown bowed as if meeting someone important, and after being introduced to the hostess, a Ms Woollcott, he kissed her from fingertip to forehead. Then he said in a ridiculous voice, "So pleased to meet you, delighted, charmed, enchanted…"

Remembering what the Nodding Horseman had said about him, being the richest man north of the border, Ms Woollcott

quickly regained her cool image, and she asked him, "What's your secret, then?"

King Clown acted shy at first, and then all puffed up he played with his frilly white shirt, and said, "Oh, it's nothing, you know, really, money breeds money."

Feeling the centre of attention, King Clown full of excitement moved in on Ms Woollcott. In a boy's voice he asked her, "Can you introduce me to some interesting ladies?"

Not long after this two women in long dazzling evening dresses appeared beside the hostess. As the MusicMan studied them he thought to himself, "I've, only ever seen women like this in magazines, or on TV. They are out of this world."

Just then a dark skinned sexy woman spoke to the MusicMan, "Hi, I'm Lola - who are you?"

The man of music told her all about himself, and why he had come to London, and the hope he had for his musical book. The MusicMan could have sworn that when he looked deep into her dark lustrous eyes, Lola winked at him and promised him a fantastic unbelievable false kingdom somewhere, and as he let his thoughts wander here and there, he watched her closely. "Go on, MusicMan, buy her a drink, and find out where that room is where men and women go to when they come to places like this, and undress her. Look at her. She is strong and lustful. Those breasts were made to be kissed and caressed all night long…"

Once again as the MusicMan's eyes moved over her shiny red dress, he thought about sex, where she stayed, and how long it would take to undress her.

Bewitched, he noticed her full red lips say, "Yes, we have had many singers in here, but I don't think any of them have ever written a musical novel before - you must be the first."

Next to Lola, Jasmine was talking to King Clown. She was telling him that she came from Baghdad, "I arrived in this country two years ago with a man who had a business selling diamonds, but he was no good - so I left him."

As if by magic, King Clown remembered a story from the Jungle Bar. He turned to the man of music standing next to him;

as he laughed he slapped his thighs, and said, “That must have been the same man who duped your friend the Restaurateur, MusicMan.”

Jasmine laughed and replied in a sweet foreign accent, “Yes, it probably was him - he has duped everyone he has ever met.”

Jasmine then smiled at the MusicMan as if to say that nothing in life was really worth bothering about any more. Then she picked up the thread of the last conversation, with the man of music, and she asked him what sort of city he came from.

The MusicMan told her about Glasgow: its dominant religion and two sects, and how the city had suffered from the rising tide of money-love, like everywhere else in the country over the last decade. It also occurred to him to mentioned to her about the Jungle Bar scene, and a few of the characters like: Doctor High, and Jack Judy Garland.

Jasmine understood only one religion, and she smiled at him when he spoke to her about his home town. The MusicMan noticed that Jasmine seemed to be able to put herself into another country quite easily. He felt that she moved in colours: when they were warm and friendly she came towards them, and when they were cold and grey she moved away from them. She said in a cadmium red tone, “It sounds an interesting place. I will need to go.”

Jasmine said she loved singing and told the MusicMan about the singer Umm Kalthoum: “Her concerts were unbelievable, ecstasy; she rarely disappointed her fans. Some of the greatest Arab poets wrote for her. If you love music, you must listen to her, Mr MusicMan.”

“I certainly will.”

As the beautiful hostess in the leopard skin one piece suit walked away towards the bar to speak to someone, a third woman joined the MusicMan and his party. The woman - a tall brunette - noticed the Nodding Horseman open his wallet, and she moved up close to him. She said in a sexy trained voice, “Good evening, my name is Tatiana. What sort of car did you arrive in?”

The Nodding Horseman stuttered, “Eh, a pink Cadillac.”

King Clown roared with laughter and bought everyone champagne. After a few glasses he started to nibble Jasmine's ear, "You know, I'm thinking of buying a rocket so I can get to London quicker to see you."

Jasmine had met many men in her life, but she had never met a money-loving clown before. She stared at him for a time. Then she laughed and - like many people before her - she thought him innocent. Jasmine did not detect his ruthless money-loving side.

Standing there in the Helter-Skelter Club, not far from the bar, the MusicMan wondered if London had a Jungle Bar scene, "Certainly, this place here is just an expensive dive - full of pimps, posers and publishing people. I wonder where the Music-lovers and Money-lovers go? What bars do they go to in London? Do they give one another names like we do? And does that name reflect something about that person's character? Oh, I'm sure they do."

Just then, the MusicMan noticed a group of men come into the club who were all wearing dark glasses and dark suits - just like the Nodding Horseman. Presently, they sat next to him, and they all started talking about a property deal. As they told the attractive waitress what they wanted to drink, one of them said in a broad English accent, "Listen mate, if we get it right - we could all be millionaires over night."

The MusicMan smiled to himself, "Ah, the London Money-lovers have just arrived."

King Clown looked at them. He may have been the richest man north of the border, but he seemed to understand how money can change your outlook on life, no matter where you are, as it propels you to the top of your bent.

Oz seemed to know quite a few people in the club. He pointed out to the MusicMan, a fat old yuppie - puffing on a cigar at the back of the club - who had six or seven young men round about him, "MusicMan, you should go over and introduce yourself to that man. He owns half of Hollywood. You never know he may well take a fancy to you, and turn your book into a film."

The MusicMan looked at the man in question, and he immediately thought about a similar character who goes into the Jungle Bar. Then he said to himself, "Who him - no chance. That fat old sugar daddy, I wouldn't leave him alone with the cat."

Thankfully, some ice smoke came across the dance floor and gave the MusicMan a good excuse not to go over, "I can hardly see the Helter-Skelter floor, never mind the man at the back of the club."

The Nodding Horseman now full of booze made a suggestion to Oz, "Right, Oz, let's jump in your pink Cadillac and go round London and pick up women."

Everyone laughed for the Nodding Horseman could not have been more out of character: normally he never touched booze or women. Hearing that King Clown owned a television station, Tatiana wiped some imaginary white fluff off his black jacket that must have fallen there from the disco lights. In a teasing voice she said to him, "I can work a computer, and I speak three languages: French, German, and English."

King Clown flapped his foot three times and, as he looked into her hopeful eyes, he mumbled, "Well, we will just have to see what we can do for you, my sweet."

Apparently, Oz came once a week to the Helter-Skelter Club. He told the Nodding Horseman in a sophisticated voice, "I like to keep an eye on the world of pleasure, and the world of business, at the same time."

Turning round to speak to the MusicMan again, Oz said in a secret voice, "The Helter-Skelter is the kind of place where famous politicians and diplomats come - even royalty pops in here now and again, you know, Mr MusicMan."

At that moment, Oz looked around him, as if someone famous had just slipped in, and had taken a table somewhere near to where the fat yuppie and his young friends were sitting.

The MusicMan replied, "Yes, it's quite a place."

A few moments later, King Clown full of madness grabbed Jasmine and pulled her round the dance floor. As he held onto her, King Clown flapped his famous foot and, as he spun her round

and round, he sang out loud, "Fly away with me London girl to Boogie Wonderland - it's this way…"

Poor Jasmine got quite dizzy, and after about two songs she came back to the little group beside the bar, laughing and saying to herself, "He's crazy! The man is moonstruck!"

King Clown stayed up on the dance floor by himself and entertained the people by dancing and trying to tie an invisible bow tie to his white frilly shirt. The Nodding Horseman loved this, and he started laughing and telling the strangers around him, "He's not only the richest man up north, but he is the funniest too."

Everyone in the club started laughing at the Clown on the dance floor, and although King Clown loved the attention he stopped dancing and lay up against the Helter-Skelter bar. Looking at a fashionable young thing in a long low cut white dress, waiting to be served, he said to her suggestively, "Oh, it really is hard work being a twenty-four hour Clown, you know."

Watching the exhibition was a businessman, and a friend of the man who went by the name of Oz. As he lit a cigarette, the friend asked Oz, "Who is the chap in the dark suit and frilly white shirt?"

Oz filled him in with the details, "The chap you are asking about owns a television company. They are down from Glasgow. Over there, beside Lola, dressed in a dark suit and colourful check shirt is the man who has written the world's first musical novel. We of course are getting involved."

The man who asked the question looked over at the MusicMan and, after studying him closely, he said quietly to Oz, "Yes, he looks an interesting character."

Oz had been to the great city of Glasgow many times, and he told his business friend, "They have a terrific nightlife up there - you know. The best place to visit is a place called the Jungle Bar. I guarantee you that if you go there the bar will blow your mind; you will come across characters you will never forget."

When King Clown came over towards his money friends again, Oz introduced him to the stranger, "Mr Guy Vander Goldstein."

King Clown laughed at the name, then said in a posh voice, "Oh, hello, Guy. How are you? So frightfully good to meet you, old boy; you know when I was standing over there talking to that beauty in the white dress, I was wondering if we had met before."

Oz kept things going by saying, "I was just telling Guy about the Jungle Bar in Glasgow, and about some of the characters who go there."

King Clown in the same mad posh accent uttered, "Terribly good place, but to be perfectly honest with you, I prefer London these days. In fact, I'm thinking about buying a place down here - any ideas?"

Oz thought it a great idea, and knowing that it would be probably in Mayfair or Kensington, he told King Clown, "That's brilliant, I will come and stay with you at weekends."

The Nodding Horseman look pleased: for he too fancied staying in the capital at weekends. And as he danced about he nodded like the devil, and said to the MusicMan, "There will be some wild parties then, MusicMan."

The MusicMan, bored with their puffed up money talk, spoke to Jasmine again. Jasmine thought the MusicMan looked like someone she had once met, and after picking up her glass, she asked him if he had ever been to the Helter-Skelter Club before.

"No, it's my first time."

She smiled, then added, "But you are not like the others.

They only talk about money, but your eyes sparkle when you look at a woman."

The MusicMan smiled at her and, as he kissed her on the cheek, he whispered, "A man is nothing without a woman."

Jasmine smiled back and, as she pushed her dark hair off her face, she said in a low-key friendly manner, "So why are you with them?"

He told her about how he had tried different schemes, "But they all seemed forlorn and a waste of time; I had to try some other road."

The question, however, did hit him at this point, and he wondered what he was doing in the capital of Britain, in some seedy expensive club with a bunch of lunatics who went by the name of the Money-lovers. However, after thinking about it, and looking at the lovely face of Jasmine again, he told himself, "Believe in the Good Lord, and no matter what is in front of you - you will succeed."

Just at this point he turned round and looked at the three Glasgow Money-lovers. They were trying to teach Guy and Oz to sing the Money-lovers song: "It's money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

Oz thought this really good fun and he started to sing and dance with the Nodding Horseman. Guy on the other hand could not make out the words. Guy screwed up his pallid face, and asked King Clown to repeat the lyrics to him slowly, "Dear boy, I can't make out a word your saying."

King Clown loved this, and milked it as far as he could, "Now Guy, say after me, one, two, three: it's money we want…"

A little later, after dancing, Oz picked up his drink, and said out of breath, "He's a wild man that Nodding Horseman, you know, when he gets the booze inside him."

Oz then started talking about how his company had just bought a big publishing house in America, and how they were now looking for entrepreneurs to run it. The MusicMan nearly said, "Well, why don't you send these three galoots over: the Money-lovers - they would love it there."

But under the flashing lights of the nightclub the MusicMan had to remind himself of his part in this crazy story, "Yea, it's a big market America. I wonder how many books they read every year?"

Oz did not know how many books were read in America every year, but the last time he had been over in the states he had met an artist. The artist he said had become fascinated by the

shape and form of a circle, and had dedicated his work to it: 'The Circle of Art'. In the Helter-Skelter nightclub Oz tried to explain the theory in depth to the MusicMan, "Everything is perfect when it makes a circle. We see through a circle of an eye. The world is a circle. We move in a circle of friends and family. Beginning and end have no meaning unless time turns full circle, and so on."

Oz looked pleased with this and he smiled at the MusicMan as if to tell him that there was more to him than making money. After a few drinks King Clown yawned and looked at his expensive watch; hardly thinking he said to the Gorilla man, "Do you think we will get a deal tomorrow?"

The Gorilla replied full of confidence, "Oh yes, why not," he then paused, and looked over at the Nodding Horseman, who was leaning up against the bar drunk. Then he added, "Well, if we keep him from fighting with anyone, tonight." On a serious note the Gorilla appended, "Oz seemed quite impressed by our friend the MusicMan."

At this point, King Clown pre-empted the negotiations, and told the Gorilla man that he wanted a half-share in the royalties home and abroad, and a substantial payment up front."

The Gorilla looked at him and knowing it all to be a great game, where everyone gets a turn, he replied accordingly, "I want the distribution rights world-wide."

Oz understood what they were up to and, after he put his glass down beside their table, he joked with them, "Looking forward to the negotiations tomorrow, gentlemen?"

# 17

The MusicMan had heard - like everyone else around the Jungle Bar scene - about the eccentricities of King Clown. However, the MusicMan couldn't believe his eyes when he awoke the next morning: King Clown filled the bathroom sink with cold water, and put his head in it. After making strange gurgling sounds, King Clown ran around the bedroom singing the Money-lovers song: "Money we want, money we crave, money we love, money we save."

Down at the hotel reception area, about half-an-hour later a taxi arrived for them to take them to the office of Oz. Getting in the black hackney, King Clown shouted at the driver, "To the land of Oz, my friend."

The driver - a local lad - wondered if his passengers were famous people from the world of show business. The cabbie chatted with them as he negotiated the busy London streets, "It's not a bad day to do business governor…"

From the previous night King Clown had a rhyme still ringing in his head. After singing it to the London cabbie, he said to him in a worldly way, "You know, you should have seen the women at the Helter-Skelter Club last night - they were unbelievable."

After joking about how the MusicMan had a soft spot for a strange creature who went by the name of Lola, King Clown reported proudly to everyone in the cab, "I have invited them all up to Scotland for the weekend next month for something to eat."

The Nodding Horseman smiled and although hung-over he gently nodded and said cheerfully, "Brilliant, I will drive them round the city."

When the taxi stopped right in the centre of the financial world of London, King Clown looked at the two Money-lovers who were sitting opposite him in the back seat of the taxi. Like an actor in a farce, King Clown brought out from his pocket of his Crombie coat three straws - that he said he had borrowed from the Helter-Skelter Club last night - and in good spirits he held them in one hand. King Clown invited his Money-loving friends to pick one, "Right, whoever gets the short straw pays for the cab."

The Gorilla man with a tired expression on his face grudgingly picked one. When he picked the short one of the three, he said in a tired voice, "All right, I'll get it."

As the Nodding Horseman laughed, King Clown slagged the Gorilla man, and the Nodding Horseman, for drinking till the early hours of the morning at the bar in the hotel, "You should both have went straight to bed after coming back from the Helter-Skelter Club, last night," he said in a funny voice.

Seeing the cabbie to be a busy man in a crowded hard working city street, King Clown said in a vexed tone, "Come on, Gorilla, get a move on. Pay the man."

The Gorilla searched his pockets for some money and mumbled something about being as sharp as a tack when it comes to money talks in London, Glasgow, or anywhere else for that matter. Trying to play his part in the theatre of the journey, the Gorilla handed the cabbie some money between the metal and the space, and he grunted harshly, "Right there you are geezer," and with a slow nod the Gorilla climbed out of the cab.

The Nodding Horseman as he exited the cab, agreed with King Clown, "Yes, it would have been better if we had gone straight to bed after the club last night."

Even though feeling pretty bad the Nodding Horseman looked around him; his face suddenly became alive, as he looked up at all the tall financial buildings that were now in front of his eyes. As if losing all his inhibition there and then on that street, the Nodding Horseman opened his arms wide as if to greet an old friend. After an imaginary hug - similar to the one he had given to the Restaurateur at the Jungle Bar a few weeks ago - the Nodding Horseman shouted, "London the capital of business and commerce, I love you!"

King Clown felt all that money around him too and, as he ran towards the large glass building in front of him, he shouted, "Come on chaps we can't keep Oz waiting."

The ex-soldier, who had now a dug away job at the reception desk of an international conglomerate, looked at the strange man in the black coat as he came running into the reception area. The ex-soldier couldn't help a little smile to himself, when he asked him, "Yes, sir, can I help you?"

Soon the Clown had everyone laughing, and to show how agile he was he danced all the way over to the glass elevator. When the Nodding Horseman, the Gorilla, and the MusicMan, joined him, King Clown pressed number twelve, and a circle lit up around a figure. Presently, a lift appeared, and the Clown sang: "Up, up, and away..."

The casually dressed secretary - poor thing - sitting near to the door looked a million miles away. I think she must have been in a dream with some fantastic friends, or in some wonderful land, where working for a living has been banished.

King Clown came out of the lift, and surreptitiously walked up to where she was sitting; he pressed his face close up to her face, and said in a strange quiet voice, "Oh, hello, is Mr Oz, in?"

The secretary jumped up and let the magazine drop that she had been reading and, with her right hand on her heart, she said, "My goodness! What a fright you gave me."

When the young lady got herself together she sat back down, and when she saw who it was, she said in a cold angry voice, "Oz told me to tell you that you have all to go through to his office and

wait for him there - he will be along as soon as he can. He is in a meeting with the MD."

The young secretary dressed in a pink mohair jumper ignored all the Money-lovers, as they walked by her; but she did look up at the stranger in the black suit, and her eyes recorded the kind smile on his face. Then she hid herself once more from the horrible world, behind a magazine, a computer, and a cup of coffee.

With a confident look on his face the MusicMan entered the office of Oz, and took a seat opposite a blank desk. The Nodding Horseman and the Gorilla immediately fought over the right to be the first to use the phone. King Clown for once kept quiet as if thinking about the future.

It appeared a very small office for a big money man in London - not a broom cupboard, but small just the same. The MusicMan looked left through the small window and fixed his eye onto the faraway image of St Paul's Cathedral, and he reminded himself about the time it had taken him from the first word on the first page to where he sat now. The MusicMan marvelled at the thought, "Yes, time is a line between places that goes round and round in a circle - just like what that artist said to Oz, I guess."

Human nature, in a thought, being what it is steadied the man of music. A voice inside him reminded him that the fantastic world out there had another side to it: "Remember, MusicMan, the nights and days you spent on the Music-lovers manuscript. And don't forget how your eye filled up with blood impinging on your foveal function, and how half-mad searching for sounds in the country estate you broke your collarbone when you fell off your mountain bike. Remember, MusicMan, all the people who told you that your ideas were bizarre. Don't forget about your so called friends who kept quiet when they knew you were out of work. Remember how they laughed when they heard you had written a musical novel. Just sit and enjoy yourself, and laugh at the thought of being on the dole for ten years. The Good Lord has given you a story to tell. And so what if the Money-lovers won't give you a penny. Keep smiling. What is money in the face of truth, anyway?

Your cup overflows with sincerity and goodness for your fellow human being. The good people will read how money-love is a social evil in a society paranoid with material gain. A good heart is a gift from God. Think of how the devil offered Jesus a false kingdom of money, and think about how worthless power is when it comes through the status of earthly gain. It is more important to lead a good life that a money one. All Money-lovers want to lord it over the poor. Let them have it. Set a good example, MusicMan, so that the next generation to come will see the evil in this society. These are just money mad days before the millennium. Get your musical book published and forget about the rest."

Oz came into the office in a hurry. As he came through the door he greeted his guests by exclaiming in an excited tone, "I have just clinched the deal for the rights to publish that dead American author, that I was telling you about last night."

A look around the room, and a few bizarre words here and there, told everyone that a bigger and better deal had not taken place in the whole of London at this hour.

The MusicMan wondered if this was the way things are done in the high-flying world of publishing, "Get the deal done, tell your friends, then mock others."

Oz sat down on his black swivel chair. He kicked his feet up on the empty desk, as if it would help to release some of the invisible pressure that he was under at the moment. Then he started to act like a yob just out of school. A quick comment about how the dead author would now be rolling about in his grave made him laugh. In a cockney accent he stated, "He's going to be a dead rich man, all right."

The Money-lovers loved this and laughed along with him. Then the Gorilla man opened the meeting by handing over the manuscript, saying, "We have got everything here typed out for you, Oz."

King Clown smiled at Oz because of the professional way the Gorilla had spoken. After a pause, and watching Oz flick through some thirty pages or so, King Clown said, "Yes, I think the musical book is going to be a number one best-seller. As you know, I have

just bought a television company, and I will see to it that it gets maximum exposure."

King Clown paused, as if to gather his thoughts, before he placed more spoken words in the rarefied air of the unseen world of business, "We would like a large payment upfront, and all the royalties to be placed in a trust for the MusicMan. The trust will be looked after by my television company and media group, and the cost of the book is to be met by your company."

Oz's eyes flashed at the money coming back to him, then he smiled and they all started to get down to the nitty-gritty of the deal: who would print the book, the price, and so on. However, just then the telephone rang and Oz picked it up. He screamed, "I told you no calls, I've got the MusicMan's deal to sort out, and we are right in the middle of it!"

Oz slammed down the telephone and blanched, "Silly cow."

Trying to get back to his supercool self, Oz sat back in his leather chair and, after staring out of the window into the tiny midday capital streets and roads down below, he reflected for a moment as if to take stock. Then he asked the MusicMan in a professional tone, "MusicMan can you give me a synopsis of your novel?"

Experience had taught the MusicMan how to explain himself to the authorities about his career, and also to people in the arts. So the story written and the story told became virtually the same thing, and moreover easily spoken: "It's set in the present day and features a group of friends. They all love music and they all go to the same bar in town. There they sing and dance; of course at this bar, where they go to, there are certain other characters who have a different outlook to life. The book is set in Glasgow. The city is well known for its socialist sympathies. In the nineteen nineties, however, the city has become a playground for capitalists and rogue traders. The songs that appear in the book reflect the wants and needs of two cultures: music being the outlet for everyone.

The MusicMan handed Oz the tape of the songs from the Music-lovers book. Beside him the Nodding Horseman nodded, the Gorilla smiled, and King Clown for some reason looked

worried. Oz put the tape in a machine. He lit a long filtered cigarette and, like so many times before, he got ready to understand a concept, an idea, and an art form, as it flew around his office. On the first beat of the first song - like a well-rehearsed trio - the Nodding Horseman's head started to nod, the Gorilla whistled, and King Clown flapped his foot.

The MusicMan felt like laughing as the comments from the three men beside him started to fly around the room inside the melody, harmony, and pulse of the song.

The Nodding Horseman with a nod, nod, nod, said: "It's a good song, yea, yea, yea."

The Gorilla growled: "Listen to that groove, man."

Cockney King Clown: "It's the business."

Not to be out of it, Oz lifted a ballpoint pen, and started to tap the desk with it until the sound of the pen was in exact time with the drumbeats. Halfway through the second verse Oz cried out, "Yes, I can see the postman, and the milkman, whistling it as they do the rounds. You have a deal gentlemen."

Oz stood up and as he bent over the desk, he stretched out his hand towards the MusicMan, and in a deep theatrical voice he said, "You're an author, young man."

The three Money-lovers cheered. Then after a moment or two, the TV and film rights were cut up, and someone suggested an image consultant.

Oz, as if being unsettled by being out of fashion, said, "We have got to get the complete package right - or else it will look naff."

The deal did not take long, and after about five minutes the negotiations were brought to a close.

Oz said smoothly, "Yes, everything seems fine gentlemen."

The Gorilla man looked pleased, and he walked around the room as if trying to waken himself up; as the Gorilla stretched his big frame, he yawned and mumbled, "Well, that's another deal done and dusted."

The Nodding Horseman stood up, and with a nod said to the MusicMan, "See Oz always puts his money where his mouth is."

The Money-lovers chatted and hung around the office of Oz for a time. King Clown laughed as he asked Oz in a light-hearted and eccentric tone, "So tell me, my friend, what has the number one man in London got organised for us tonight, then?"

The Nodding Horseman smiled and got ready to nod again. Oz looked at the Nodding Horseman's face and, as he picked up the small fashionable telephone to speak to his secretary, he said in a carefree tone as he dialled, "Yes, we are going to the Moonbeam Club tonight, gentlemen."

On hearing this news, the Nodding Horseman jumped up and down, and cried, "Brilliant! Oz! "Brilliant!"

Thinking he would meet someone in the corridor, the Nodding Horseman ran outside, shouting wildly, "The Moonbeam Club! Yes! Brilliant Oz! Brilliant!"

Presently, the others followed and for a time everyone hung around the corridor outside the office of Oz. There the Money-lovers all laughed and joked. King Clown twirled his earlobe and marvelled, "Isn't it funny how the serious world always falls down, when people from the world of business, and people from the world of pleasure get together."

Thinking about the launch of the book the Nodding Horseman said sarcastically, "I think we should launch the book in Edinburgh. There's only one big publishing house there, and he is so out of date - he thinks the Beatles are still in fashion."

The secretary, sitting not that faraway, looked over at them, and she smiled at the MusicMan as if to congratulate him in a personal kind of way. Before wandering to the elevator King Clown made an arrangement for the follow-up meeting. He said slowly and slyly, "Oz we will come back down next month and tie up any loose ends."

Just before they got into the glass elevator to go back down to the busy streets of London, Oz reminded them about the arrangements for that night, "Right, remember chaps, I'll pick you up at nine-thirty tonight at your hotel, and we will hit the Moonbeam Club around ten."

The Nodding Horseman jumped once more into the air and cried, “Yes! Brilliant Oz! Brilliant!”

# 18

The MusicMan wondered if this would be another dark and dingy backstreet club where the rich and famous go. He was soon uplifted, however, when he noticed the flashing neon sign outside the building, saying: 'Welcome to the Moonbeam Club,' and the people going inside just ordinary everyday people.

Oz had telephoned in advance, and on arrival he met the owner at the door: Mr Richard Common. The owner, an impish looking fellow, dressed in the latest designer clothes, could have been anything between forty and sixty. When Mr Common spotted Oz in the crowd outside he walked forward and down two little steps. Presently, he shouted over to him, "Oz, good man, you're just in time to see Mamma Moist!" and he signalled to the stewards to make way for Oz and his guests. "Nice to see you Oz, go right through and into section two."

Once inside they had to negotiate passed all the people who were coming and going from one section to another. There were six large sections in the Moonbeam Club, and they all had their own space-age name, like: Uranus 54321, in section two.

At the bar in section two, the MusicMan bought himself a Naked Eye cocktail, which turned out to be whisky and ice - his favourite drink. The Nodding Horseman bought himself a pint of

Rocket Fuel. The Gorilla man bought himself a Fireball Galileo: champagne and orange, and King Clown, after some deliberation, opted for a Zond: Russian vodka with lemonade.

Sweet Mamma Moist had just finished her first song, and after telling the people that she loved them all, she went on to add, in a deep sexy voice something about love being like a hard-faced man, unpredictable, and never on time, which got a big cheer.

The MusicMan looked around and noticed the people listening to her were mostly drag queens, from the world of show business. He thought to himself that some of them looked like some of the Blow boys and Blow girls, who hang around with the Queen without a Crown, back at the Jungle Bar in Glasgow.

Oz liked the singer and he turned to the Nodding Horseman, and said in a wild cockney voice, "She is big, she is beautiful, and she is mean," and then he laughed a funny laugh.

To this news, the Nodding Horseman nodded like the devil, then he sang some words back to him, "Yea, it's the business, all right."

They listened to her song and after that they all then went through to section one Andromeda, where they listened to a poet recite a poem titled: Anna-Marie and the Beggar. This really appealed to the Nodding Horseman - who kept tugging at the MusicMan's arm and saying to him in between many nods, "See, I told you, Oz knows everyone in London."

When the poet had finished reciting his poem, the Nodding Horseman started clapping and moving around as if he could not contain himself. He eventually shouted into the MusicMan's ear, "Outrageous!"

The MusicMan had never seen the Nodding Horseman so animated before, and he laughed along with Oz, King Clown and the Gorilla man. The Nodding Horseman quickly added, as if trying to justify his mad actions, "He's the greatest performer, I've ever seen."

Then a few minutes later, as if to deflect the attention away from himself, the Nodding Horseman turned to the MusicMan and offered him some advice: "If you ever find yourself on stage at

anytime in your career MusicMan, here is what you do. You give it to them full pelt, and I tell you they will love you. Look tired and disinterested, and you're doomed."

For some reason, the Nodding Horseman looked doomed himself after he had said this. The Gorilla man, who knew a thing or two about famous performers although still laughing - indicated by way of a look that although the Nodding Horseman was right, he thought him funny. Roaring with laughter, the Gorilla said: "That's it, MusicMan."

When they walked away from the stage, the MusicMan listened to the people talk around him about the performance. As he wondered about the art of performance, the MusicMan suddenly noticed a familiar figure coming towards him, "Surely it can't be."

The MusicMan grabbed the Incredible Carpet Salesman by the arm, and said to him, "Ali Baba, what the hell are you doing in London!"

The man who the Jungle Bar people call the Incredible Carpet Salesman looked worse for wear; but as soon as his big rolling eyes fixed on the familiar face of the man of music from the Jungle Bar, the Incredible Carpet Salesman hugged him.

The Incredible Carpet Salesman's face came alive, and he planted a wet kiss on his friend's cheek. "MusicMan, I've been in every nightclub in London - and I have only been here a week."

The Incredible Carpet Salesman looked around him to see who the MusicMan was with. He knew the three Money-lovers to look at, but he didn't really know them. Ali Baba smiled back at the MusicMan, then said, "Is this a dream, MusicMan?"

Even though the three Money-lovers knew the Incredible Carpet Salesman to look at, after staring at him they started to chat among themselves again.

Expressing his thoughts in a wild and adventurous manner, the Incredible Carpet Salesman told the MusicMan where he had been dancing and carousing. He lifted up his Fireball Galileo up to the light. Then he added in a tipsy tone, "Business has been fantastic, MusicMan, I've made a fortune this week selling Persian

carpets to lords, ladies and goodness knows who else, and now I am going to rock'n'roll till the sun comes up."

While down in the capital the Incredible Carpet Salesman had bought himself something to wear. As he buttoned his coat up, he smiled and said to his friend, "Well, MusicMan, what do you think of my coat, then?"

The MusicMan looked at the Imperial tweed - that even under the dim lights of the Moonbeam Club - he could see had white flecks all through it running, like tiny slanted arrows from top to bottom. Then he smiled and replied, "With winter coming along it looks a good buy."

Apparently, this was however no ordinary coat, as the Incredible Carpet Salesman told him: "The shopkeeper said that it once belonged to a chap called Yakimov, and before that the czar of Russia."

The Incredible Carpet Salesman unfortunately had too many drinks to be a storyteller. His eyes fixed on an image of his own reflection behind the Andromeda bar, and he said sorrowfully, "I wish old Ribbentrop the Glasgow poet were here, you know."

He went quiet after this, then he mumbled to himself something about London being a rock and a hard place, and about people being chic, quick and fashionable. Then he went on about a woman he may telephone, who had access to champagne bottles, narcotics and dreams.

Seeing the Andromeda bar being not faraway, and reasonably quiet at the moment, he decided to walk over and buy his friend the MusicMan a drink. As the two men waited for the barman to get a bottle of something out of the large fridge, the Incredible Carpet Salesman spotted a group of Nordic looking ladies standing beside him. Thinking about how well he had got on with Scandinavian people in the past, he said to the three creatures, dressed in smart light blue uniforms, "Oh, excuse me ladies, could I possibly buy you a little bottle of champagne?"

One of the Nordic looking ladies smiled, and said in a lovely foreign accent,"Ya, you certainly can."

So for a time the MusicMan stood and watched his friend have fun with them. He also noticed the Money-lovers looking over at him. King Clown turned round slyly to the Nodding Horseman, and asked him, "What does he do, again, that chap with the long hair?"

The Nodding Horseman nodded and answered, "He sells carpets all over the world." Then he added glibly, "He hangs around with the Music-lovers at the Jungle Bar."

When the MusicMan approached the Money-lovers, King Clown looked at him and, in a sly and sarcastic tone, he said, "I think your friend the Carpet Salesman is a bit of a wild man, eh."

The man of music from Glasgow felt like saying that's because he's a music-loving rock'n'roller, but to keep as far from controversy as possible, the MusicMan replied, "Oh, he's a good lad."

Just then, Richard Common the club owner joined the Money-lovers. The owner, after telling them a few stories about a few people who had been to the club recently, tapped the side of his long nose, and said to Oz, "Let's go up to the office - shall we?"

Richard Common, the club owner, signalled to the barman that they were going upstairs. The black barman - who had been staring at the Incredible Carpet Salesman - nodded that he understood. Up in his office, Mr Common opened a drawer and brought out a mirror, a razor blade, and a small packet of cocaine, and he started chopping up the white powder into thin white lines.

Mr Common - who had a good long nose for sniffing - grunted before taking the substance into his body; as the drug went to work he exclaimed in delight, "The biz, the biz."

The MusicMan indicated not to waste any on him, so Richard handed the rolled-up note along with the glass and the white powder onto the Gorilla man. The Gorilla bent over the desk and rested his large frame onto it like a water buffalo. Then he took the note and pointed it at the white line. The white line disappeared as fast as a rat up a drainpipe. Then he passed the note to the Nodding Horseman.

At first, the Nodding Horseman refused, but his mentor, King Clown, insisted, "Listen, Nodding Horseman, you'll be a better man once you get that stuff into your nodding head. I tell you the world will become crystal-clear to you."

King Clown laughed, then he added, "And you never know you may very well meet a Nodding Horsewoman down there on the Moonbeam dance floor - later on tonight."

It wasn't long until King Clown and the Gorilla were trying to moonwalk around the small room; they shouted at each other the words from the song playing downstairs from the club as they did so.

Full of the 'biz' Richard Common jumped about with the Glasgow Money-lovers for a time, and strange as it sounds he started talking to King Clown about a well-known singer they both knew. The MusicMan noticed how boys talk quickly became adult chat, and adult chat became boys' talk: all because of the fascination of the opposite sex.

Richard Common remembered a night when he had chased a famous singer round the house wearing only a football strip. The Nodding Horseman looked confused at first. After a few seconds, however, he nodded at the club owner and asked in a low-key voice, "What was she doing wearing a football strip?"

Everyone roared with laughter, and Richard Common told him, "I was the one wearing the football strip. I had just been to see my favourite team playing football."

Looking like a new man, as if someone had just pumped him up with life, the club owner continued to jump around the room. When he eventually sat down on his desk, he immediately stood up. Then as he sat back down again, he shouted, "Right let's go and see Gunshot! They will be on in section three, Aquarius, in one second." Richard Common flew out of the office, shouting the lyrics from their latest hit single: "I'm going to go, go, go, like a Gunshot."

The MusicMan left the room last of all and as he switched off all the lights he noticed the film star faces, that were on the walls, sadden and die, no doubt till the next time the club owner,

Mr Richard Common, brought his guests to his peculiar little office inside the Moonbeam Club.

The explosive band Gunshot played their songs in section three, Aquarius; it seemed to be going quite well. The MusicMan noticed how a little conference took place at the bar between the Gorilla, the Nodding Horseman, and King Clown, as regards the band, the lead singer, and their viability to make money on the world stage. The Nodding Horseman liked the singer of Gunshot. As he listened to him sing, he nodded to himself and repeated the same words as the club owner had used just a few moments ago, "The biz, the biz."

The MusicMan thought about the songs he had written for his musical book, "Although I don't have any plans to perform them live, for the sake of publicity I will sing them at different venues to promote the book. I will perform them with just a guitar. The real effect, I hope will come when people hear the music and the story together in the book."

Gunshot tore into another song, one from their latest album titled: Tattooed Rock'n'roll Schoolboys, and everyone cheered. Out of the corner of his eye, the MusicMan spotted his friend the Incredible Carpet Salesman. He was jumping up and down in the pogo style, near the front of the stage. The MusicMan laughed at his friend, who he knew from the Jungle Bar back in Glasgow, "What is he like."

Then a thought crossed his mind, and this time it made the MusicMan sad and reflective, "It's funny how the most outrageous people in life never make it onto the stage. I guess the bright lights of London are not so bright when you know who is behind them."

Time went by and the bars all shut. Everyone seemed to accept this, and they slowly drifted outside and onto the early morning London streets.

The flight back to Glasgow, the next day, seemed more relaxed than the one going a few days earlier. As the MusicMan looked out through the small round window of the plane, he stared at a bubbly white world down below. Through the fantastic white clouds he wondered about his future, "Well, it's all go from

now on, MusicMan. The dream that has been inside you - will soon be realised."

The MusicMan started to hum some of the songs that he had written for his musical novel, and as he went through the chord changes in his mind, he listened to the lyrics and wondered about what other accompaniments would sound good on the tape for the novel.

His thoughts were momentarily interrupted by the Gorilla and King Clown. The two of them were getting excited about how they could pull the wool over the public's eyes. The Gorilla man said in an undertone, "I tell you, King Clown, if we get the right man to do the advertising we could increase the profit by a cool million in the first year."

Not long after this King Clown turned to the MusicMan and asked him rather tentatively, "MusicMan, you know that woman who hangs around the Jungle Bar. The one who goes by the name of the Queen without a Crown?"

"Yes."

"What do you know about her?"

The MusicMan thought about her and how she had broken the hearts of many men over the years. Then, as a smile crossed his face, he replied, "The people who go to the Jungle Bar say that she will never fall in love: for falling in love is a heartbreaking experience. Many people say that all she wants to do is go around breaking young men's hearts."

The MusicMan paused and looked out of the window again. Then he turned, and looked into the eyes of the Clown beside him. He told him mechanically, "I have heard it said, however, that once her heart is broken she will be no longer the Queen of the Jungle Bar."

This news seemed to excite King Clown, and he screamed with laughter. Bending forward he said to the MusicMan, "I tell you, MusicMan, I'm going to break her pretty red heart. I'm going to marry that woman."

King Clown shouted at the air stewardess and ordered drinks for all the passengers on the plane. He then stood up and in a

funny - almost eccentric - voice he made an announcement as if he were the captain of the aircraft, “This is the ten o’clock flight to Glasgow, and I am happy to announce to you that down below on planet earth walks the woman I am going to marry.”

The passengers started laughing and turning round and talking to each other about the strange man, in the tight fitting dark suit, who was sitting in the middle of the plane. Not faraway from where the MusicMan sat, a man of about sixty turned to a smart middle-aged businesswoman, and said, “He’ll soon come back down to earth,” and the two of them chuckled.

King Clown sat back down and looked left, over to the opposite row of seats, and then he shouted over to where the Nodding Horseman was sitting, “What do you think about that, Nodding Horseman?”

The Nodding Horseman made a mad face, and as he nodded, he shouted back over to King Clown, “The Queen is the one for you, all right!”

# 19

The MusicMan, that night as he sat by the fireside in his apartment, thought long and hard about how he should layout the songs for the tape version of the Music-lovers book. His acrobatic thoughts seemed to turn this way and that until he realised: "It must be true what they say that a clown and a man of the arts, in life, only separate themselves by a hair's-breadth."

The MusicMan would have thrown everything away there and then, if it were not for the belief that words in art can really change things in life. Thinking about life when he was a boy, and all the wonderful things that had happened to him, he reminded himself, "When we feel down we need someone or something to entertain us. We need songs to sing. We need books to read, and above all we need to share them. So push on, MusicMan, and finalise the songs for the musical book, that you have been given to write, and go and record the songs next week."

After working till midnight, he went to bed. When he awoke the next morning, the MusicMan looked around the bedroom and for a moment or two he wondered where he was. As the MusicMan focused on the mazarine blue woodchip wallpaper around him, he quickly reassured himself that this was no hotel bedroom he was in.

"No, this is your home MusicMan. You are back home. London is a faraway place again."

The MusicMan stretched for the old-fashioned alarm clock that lay on the floor, and yawned as he picked it up.

"Half past nine."

"I'll get up soon."

"Half past nine!"

"What day is it?"

"Saturday! Tom and Agatha will be along in half-an-hour, and I haven't got anything prepared for them."

The MusicMan jumped out of bed, and as he pulled on some clothes he tried to organize their lessons, "Right, Tom can practise minor chords, and Agatha can go over modulation and cadences."

Just as the MusicMan had finished washing and shaving the doorbell rang, and so with a towel in his hand he went to open the door. Agatha and Tom had never seen their music teacher so dishevelled and disorganised before and, prior to going inside, Agatha said to Tom in a very worldly way - for a girl of twelve, "I think he's got a woman in his life at the moment."

Tom on the other hand hardly noticed, he just opened his guitar case, then sat down on the chair by the door and started to sing another song that he had written, "MusicMan what do you think of this song…"

Later on that afternoon, the MusicMan went into town to see if he could buy himself something new to listen to. After trailing around the record stores and high street shops, he eventually ended up at the Jungle Bar for an afternoon drink.

The Jungle Bar always seemed different in the afternoon and, when the MusicMan arrived there, he hardly knew any of the faces who were sitting here and there around the bar.

Two customers he did recognise, however, were the Rattler and the Gorilla man. The two of them were sitting at the bar drinking beer. This seemed very odd indeed: for it was well known, around the Jungle Bar scene, that the two men did not like each other. Apparently, last night there had been a party back at King Clown's place after they had got back from London.

The Gorilla sitting at the Jungle Bar although tired said he felt wonderful, and he couldn't wait to tell the people of the Jungle Bar all about what had happened last night at the party.

As the MusicMan stood at the bar, he overheard the Gorilla man say to the Rattler, "When we came back from London, last night, we headed straight to the Jungle Bar. Everyone seemed up for a wild night. It all started when King Clown spiked the Queen's drink and somehow he managed to get her back to his flat. This morning when I woke up on the chair in his living room, King Clown came through and told me that they were now in love."

The Rattler man looked impressed, "That sounds rattling good fun. I knew I should have went out last night."

The Gorilla added, as he laughed, "He always said he wanted to break her pretty red heart, but we didn't believe him - did we."

Their conversation then drifted to what happened in London. Directing his gaze as if all the way back down to the office of Oz, the Gorilla man roared with laughter, "We've got enough money for three musical books - and as many tapes and records."

The Jungle Bar, even in the afternoon, has a way of sending people up just to bring them back down: just then the two Money-lovers spotted the MusicMan standing not faraway from them at the bar, and the two men stopped speaking. After a short pause that seemed to tell everything, the Gorilla man waved his hand as if to invite the MusicMan to come over and join them, "Hey, MusicMan, we were just talking about you."

The Gorilla's big frame moved about on the bar stool, as if lazy for a greeting. Then his thick face smiled, and his eyes sparkled as if seeing the cash, for the latest venture, right in front of him.

The Rattler man, who went round town every Saturday afternoon with a view to rattling people, congratulated the MusicMan, "Well done, MusicMan, looks like you're going to be famous, after all."

Before roaring with laughter again, the Gorilla nodded his head just like his sidekick the Nodding Horseman. He then said in

jest, “Yes, King Clown has got big plans for the man the people of the Jungle Bar call the MusicMan.”

Things seemed to settle back down to what they had been like before, and the two Money-lovers started talking to each other about other media ventures, “There are lots of things going on - subject of course to conditions and requirements from the financial wizard in London, Mr Oz,” said the Gorilla, laughing.

Cracking a joke, the Rattler wondered if King Clown needed any new TV presenters, “I could do it - if the money is right, you know.”

The Gorilla man looked at the MusicMan. Then he said, “What do you think, MusicMan? Do you think he would make a rattling good announcer?”

The MusicMan took a drink of cold beer and smiled. Then he said something about heading back towards the centre of town. The Rattler man had not meant to stay too long in the Jungle Bar; for he does not like to be in the same place for any amount of time. He paid for his drink, then he too got ready to leave the Jungle Bar.

As the Gorilla man got up off his bar stool he stretched himself, wiped some sleep out of his eyes, and through a yawn he said, “Right, I’m out of here too. I’m going to go and see Old Lickspittle.”

The Rattler man said that he did not have anyone or anything to rattle today. He asked the Gorilla, who looked in a reasonable frame of mind, if he was going his way. When he heard he was, the Rattler asked him if he could give him a lift. This did not seem to annoy the Gorilla man.

Presently, he turned to the MusicMan, and said to him in a relaxed and friendly manner, “Come on I’ll drop you off down town as well, MusicMan.”

When he moved the Gorilla man looked quite quick, but when he stopped he slumped again and looked tired. The MusicMan noticed this as they all crossed the street towards his camouflage jeep. Last night the Gorilla had left the jeep outside

the Jungle Bar - after the bar had shut - and this was him coming to pick it up again.

The Gorilla pulled away from the Jungle Bar, in what he sometimes calls his Sherman tank, and when he overtook cars on the way back into the city centre, he looked down at them as if he were a traffic cop.

The band the Picture People, who the Nodding Horseman managed, crossed the road at this point not far away from the Jungle Bar. They were heading towards the south side of the city. The Gorilla noticed them and, full of fun, he rolled down his window and bawled, "Hey, Picture People! Have you got yourself a good manager yet?"

He then looked into the mirror, and smiled at the MusicMan who was sitting in the back seat and, as he laughed, he admitted, "The Nodding Horseman is not a bad manager - I suppose." The Gorilla changed gear, and added, "That is when you get him sober," then he roared with laughter again.

The Rattler man did not know what he meant, so the Gorilla man told him all about the Moonbeam Club in London, where the Nodding Horseman had taken cocaine and danced the night away.

There had been an accident in the city centre, just opposite the cinema complex. The collision had been between two vehicles: an ambulance had collided with a black hackney cab. There were bodies strewn across the road. From the back seat of the jeep the MusicMan looked at the scene, and he remembered once again how going home one night he had witnessed a taxi driver drag a young drunk man by the collar off the street so that he could get on his way with his fare. The Gorilla slowed down, but the policeman on the spot waved him on.

The Rattler sitting in the front seat had no time for tragedy, and when the MusicMan told him about an accident he had witnessed recently, the Rattler man turned round and responded in an angry tone, "Listen, MusicMan, it's a Jungle out there, and if you want to survive it - you had better start rattling a few people."

That night the MusicMan went back into town to meet his Music-loving friends at the Jungle Bar. His friends: the Restaurateur, El Greco, and Doctor High were all there when he arrived. Leaning up against the bar his good friend El Greco shouted, "Hey, MusicMan, welcome back to the Jungle."

Apparently, word had got round the Jungle Bar about the wild scene last night back at King Clown's place; and for some reason the atmosphere in the bar tonight had mischief, folly, crime and passion all mixed together.

Jack Judy Garland, informed his Music-loving friends, "They say King Clown spiked the Queen without a Crown's drink in the Jungle Bar last night. Then he took her back to his place, and they say her heart is now broken."

Someone on the south side of the city that afternoon had told the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur that the King and Queen were now in love, and that they were going to have another wild party tonight to celebrate the great event. After he had told the assembled crowd this at the Jungle Bar, the Restaurateur looked at El Greco. Observing his academic friend's reaction to this news, the happy-go-lucky Restaurateur added nonchalantly, "Do you fancy going along?"

So after the bar had shut that night a crowd of Music-lovers from the Jungle Bar all headed up to the west end, and the question everyone was asking was: "Has King Clown really broken the Queen without a Crown's heart?"

About half past twelve a small group of people gathered outside the infamous apartment of the man the Jungle Bar people call King Clown. As the MusicMan looked at his watch he wondered if they should knock the door at this time of night, and see what in the world was going on up there. Someone in the little crowd noticed that the downstairs door - leading up to King Clown's apartment - was open and presently the little crowd of Music-lovers walked inside and up the little flight of stairs.

The MusicMan looked at the paintings, and the memory of the party, at the Clown's residence - not all that long ago - came back to him. The Restaurateur, at the top of the stairs, looked at

the MusicMan, and he said, as if hoping everything would be all right, "I bet someone has probably made the whole thing up at the Jungle Bar."

The place was as silent as the grave, and as they all looked around the flat, the Restaurateur added in a hushed tone, "Looks like a bomb has hit the place."

El Greco shook his head and laughed, "Yea, it must have been a wild party, last night, right enough."

On their way out of the main room, a Blow boy from the Jungle Bar suddenly appeared on the landing. The Blow boy's face was as white as a sheet.

In the deathly silence the MusicMan asked him, "What is it lad?"

The Blow boy looked at him, and after recognising the face of the MusicMan, he bent his head down. Then he said in a solemn voice, "The two of them are dead."

The Music-lovers all looked at each other, then they went into the bedroom to the left of the main room. And there right enough lying on top of a four-poster bed lay King Clown and the Queen without a Crown.

There was no sign of any blood or any violence. The modern luxurious room had a calm feeling about it, like before a special occasion.

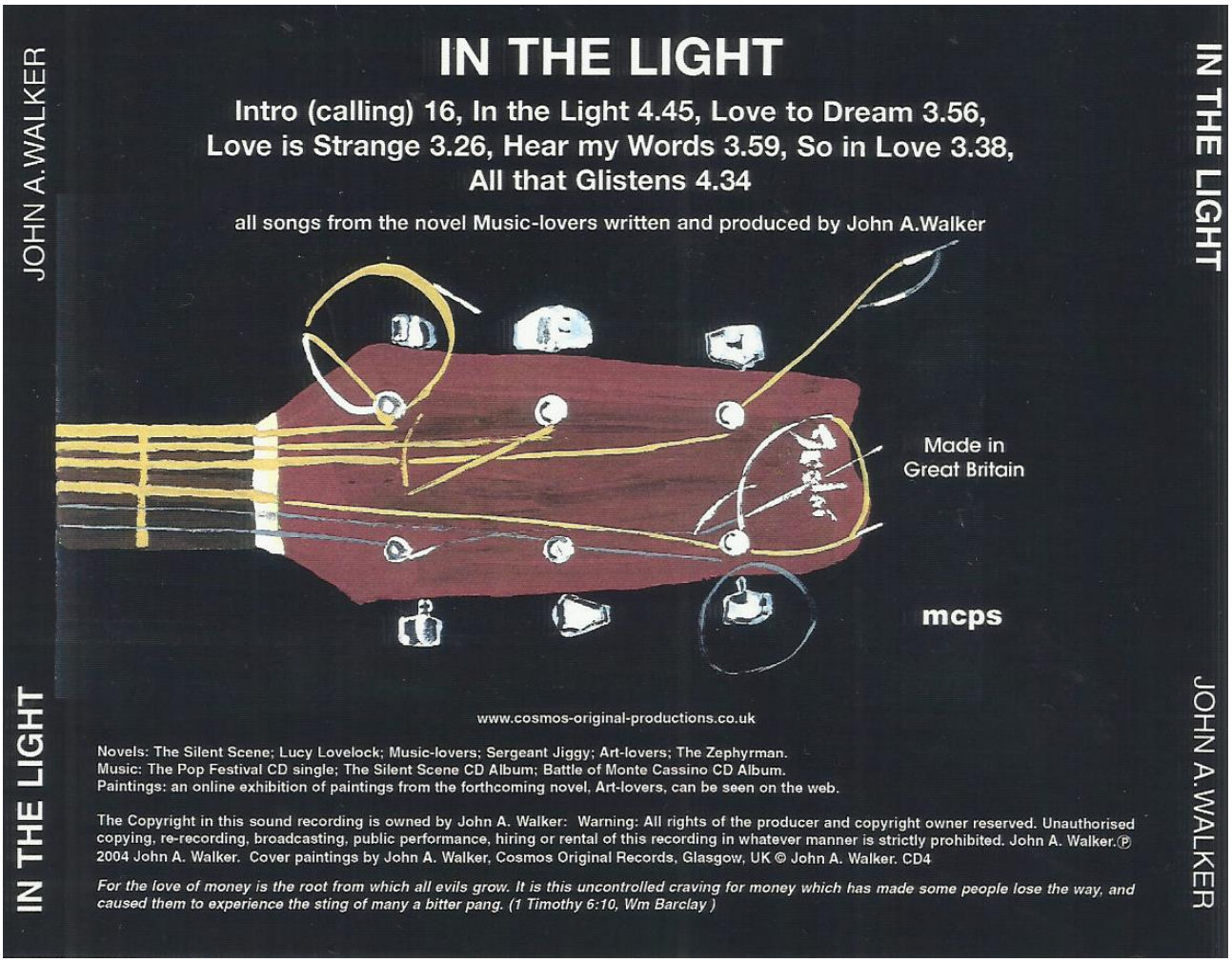
As they stood there, the MusicMan noticed a note beside the bed. He picked it up and after he had folded it open, he read it out loud to his music friends: "The Queen of the Jungle Bar all through her life maintained that if she ever fell in love her heart would break and she would die - this is what has happened. I found out for the first time what love is all about, and knowing that I have led a miserable money-life, I have followed the Queen without a Crown: for my heart too is now broken."

One of his friends whispered to the MusicMan: "This is unbelievable; this story will no doubt be talked about for many a year at the Jungle Bar," and in that moment, an era seemed to change.

Music from the novel:

https://youtu.be/FFBr4HEsVcQ

https://soundcloud.com/cosmosoriginal


JOHN A.WALKER
IN THE LIGHT
IN THE LIGHT
Intro (calling) 16, In the Light 4.45, Love to Dream 3.56,
Love is Strange 3.26, Hear my Words 3.59, So in Love 3.38,
All that Glistens 4.34
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For the love of money is the root from which all evils grow. It is this uncontrolled craving for money which has made some people lose the way, and caused them to experience the sting of many a bitter pang. (1 Timothy 6:10, Wm Barclay )
IN THE LIGHT
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